

Reflections

Fall Semester 2021

Community Engaged Pioneer: Clint Gardner



Clint Gardner is Program Manager of College Writing & Reading Centers <https://www.slccswc.org>. See his website at <http://www.cgardner.org/>.

1. How long have you been teaching with community engaged learning?

I have been teaching with service-learning/community engaged learning since the 90s—but I'm hazy on the exact year. Maybe it was the turn-of-the-century. I first taught

Upcoming Events

- Join us for the Engaged Learning Celebration on January 28, 2022 at 12 PM in the STC Oak Room, Taylorsville Campus. This event honors excellent student work and the faculty who support it.

English 1010 and then took that experience into teaching what would become the English 1810: Mentoring Writers class.

2. How did you get started in this high-impact practice?

Faculty colleagues from what was then the English Department and Development Writing Departments were involved. Those folks include Elisa Stone (woot!), Jennifer Courtney, Jason Roberts, and Brittany Stephenson (among others) who were making use of service-learning, and I was heavily influenced by folks from the Thayne Center for Service & Learning.

3. What challenges have you faced over the years?

I think two of the most difficult things to overcome were the admonition that service could not be done on campus, and service must never be paid. With those two serious blockades out of the way, we were able to offer the Student Writing & Reading Center as a service site.

4. What has been the most rewarding about it?

The most rewarding aspect of teaching a community engaged curriculum is that students learn effective teaching methodologies in a real-life context. They also see the impact of the work that they are doing, and learn from it.

5. What advice do you have for others who are considering becoming service-learning (community engaged learning) practitioners?

Don't think that it is going to be a ton of extra work. I actually think there is more work in resisting the methodology than there is in putting it in place. Students can and do step up when they are asked to engage; I think even more than they do with traditional teaching methods.

What's in a name?

The Engaged Learning Office (ELO) supports college-wide civic and community engagement efforts. One initiative the ELO facilitates, the service-learning program, is changing names! Service-learning will now be known as community engaged learning (CEL). There is a trend nationally to move toward CEL because it speaks more to the multi-directional, reciprocal nature of the pedagogy. Please note that you will see both terms for a while since it will take some time to change all of the places across the institution where the name is found.

—Lucy Smith, Engaged Learning Coordinator

About Reflections

Reflections is a newsletter for and about community engaged learning published twice a year by the SLCC ELWS Department. We welcome submissions on student experiences, faculty perspectives, pedagogical insights, community partner engagement, civic involvement, staff profiles, and upcoming events.

Send photos, events, posters, or articles to estone@bruinmail.slcc.edu.

Editors: Elisa Stone and Daniel Baird

Lisa Packer: New Chair of the ELWS Community Engagement Committee

Lisa Packer is the new chair of the community engagement committee here at SLCC. Lisa teaches English 900, English 1010 and 2010 (both service-learning designated) and Children's Literature here at Salt Lake Community College.

She received her undergraduate degree in English and her master's degree in Applied Linguistics at the University of Utah.

Lisa loves to incorporate service-learning and community engagement into her composition classes because it fosters a more interactive environment where students can see issues in their community first hand. When Lisa's students are out in the community serving others, she has observed that their motivation and desire to write about social justice issues is magnified. Her goal as chair of the ELWS Civic Engagement Committee this year is to:

- Work on continuing our commitment with the ELWS Department as an Engaged Department;
- Meet regularly with ELWS Civic Engagement Committee to promote awareness in the ELWS Department of what an Engaged Department means in our teaching and particularly for students;
- Provide training to ELWS full-time faculty during department meetings and one-on-one for interested faculty.



In her "free" time, Lisa loves being in the outdoors, hiking and skiing in the Utah mountains. During the summer she loves spending time with her family on vacation to Newport Beach, California.

Serving SLCC Community and Beyond: The ELWS Literary Magazine *Folio*

Since 1999 *Folio*, Salt Lake Community College's award-winning literary and visual art magazine, has drawn together emerging talents within the college to create a platform for student voices and experiences. This publication showcases and honors the brilliant imagination, creativity, and activism of the SLCC students, staff, and faculty through their poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, photography, art, and multimedia.

Folio is produced in ENGL 1830: Literary Magazine Studies. This is the course that markets, curates, edits, designs, publishes, and launches an edition of *Folio* every fall and spring semester. This course is one of the Writing Studies courses in publication offered at SLCC and is considered a high-impact learning practice.

Folio's unique collection of art and literature represents the diverse student body at SLCC and brings to light a spectrum of societal challenges from racism to mental health and domestic abuse.

Folio won Second Place in the 2019 CCHA Literary Magazine Southwest Division Contest and Third Place in the Southwest Division for 2014.

Engaged Learning Celebration Announcement

One of the Engaged Learning Celebration award winners who will be recognized this spring is Ashlen Frederickson. Ashlen took English 1010 from Benjamin Solomon, and she worked with the Boys and Girls Club as a part of her service-learning project. Ashlen choose to work with the Boys and Girls Club because youth programs such as these, "influenced her life and provided her with positive mentors." In her ENGL 1010 class, she was thrilled to apply the learning she got in class to true experiences and connect with writing as a form of action. Ashlen stated that "she no longer had to imagine things to write about but instead had actual experiences that provided a vehicle for her writing." She previously struggled with traditional, lecture style courses so she fully embraced the opportunity to get in the community and apply her learning. She credits Benjamin for his outstanding teaching which helped make her experience amazing. —Lucy Smith

Community Engaged Learning Resources

Lisa Packer and Daniel Baird have written "Introduction to Community Engaged Learning" in order to help faculty and students better understand community engagement in ELWS. (For article and related texts see the QR code.)



ELWS Faculty Testimonials

"Community engaged learning practice in my linguistics course gives my students a framework to transfer their knowledge about the field of linguistics to a real-world application. When students are taking a course that introduces a whole field of study, it's extraordinarily helpful to connect them with practical experiences." —Christie Bogle

"I have been using Community Engagement in my class for the last 10 years. For my ENGL 1010 and 2010 courses, I encourage students to explore their own personal interests in community to determine how they would like to be more engaged. Many of them choose to service directly, but many of them also do research, look at government

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involvement or become activists for causes they believe in. These activities provide a wonderful drive for motivated, personal, and invested writing. The writing is more creative, thoughtful, and engaging for both the student and for the teacher. Community engagement has definitely improved my instruction.” —Jason Roberts

Community Engagement in ELWS

Faculty were asked what they thought about how they are using community engaged practices in their own teaching. In other words, how were they including and integrating social justice issues, research, and community into their work? How were students connecting their writing to the community? How were they showcasing that work?

“In 1010: analyzing public writing, local. In 2010: students select a local social issue to focus on for the semester.” —Ann Fillmore

“Offering service-learning/community engaged learning as an option in every course I teach. Volunteering at the same organization some of my students are, so that we can collaborate in reciprocal partnerships. Offering to publish their work in *Reflections* newsletter.” —Elisa Stone

“Having students write about their community and local issues they encounter. Their works are showcased in their eportfolio.” —Alice Lopez

“Mentoring writers and students at CWC/ SWC & planning workshop ideas for future engagement.” —Melissa Helquist

“I have my students pick an issue for the semester and then choose an organization through the Thayne Center. From there they do either direct service or research with that organization. It has really revamped my teaching and opened up important conversations with my students and the community.” —Lisa Packer

“Through revised CLOs and in-class research, both of which encourage students to engage more consciously with local/global issues, authors, and texts.” —Stephanie Maenhardt

“I had students do a ‘Rethinking’ Essay for their research project. Many chose to do community or social justice issues such as: prison, programs for addicts, mental health, foster care or many have done issues related to their careers.” —Lynn Kilpatrick

“In *Diverse Women Writers*, students look at current issues impacting marginalized groups and write about what they would like to see done and how they can work in their circles of influence to be advocates and allies.” —Brittany Stephenson

“1030 students interviewed working professionals this term to learn about how they write for the profession and how the profession affects the community. Mostly they shared their learning with each other in the course.” —Stacey Van Dahm

“Discussing linguistic dominance and unpacking the role of different dialects in communication.” —Anne Canavan

“2010 students are actively researching and writing about community issues; Pub Studies students are producing a community anthology and participating in visiting writer events; next spring, 2260 students will be involved with a visiting writer and events for the community; social justice themes are built into courses.” —Brenda Sieczkowski

“In 2030, talking about language use among and between different demographics inevitably brings up social justice issues.” —Jim Beatty

“I am adding videos of poets/writers that connect to the issues we are studying. In the video they read a selection, and then I do a Q&A with them for the students to watch and discuss.” —Bernice Olivas

“Bookmaking workshops for the community. Also, 2010 students interviewing members of the community for their profiles. Connecting with community organizations for publication projects. Chapbook Launch Event.” —Charlotte Howe

“I use current events related to social justice as writing topics for journal entries or short response papers.” —Jerri Harwell

“Discussion on challenged books in the community.” —Marlena Stanford

“Students select issues that are important to themselves and their communities or identities. They also study anti-racist, -sexist, -ableist work and engage with it.” —Tiffany Rousculp

“Small thing: Encouraging students to also consider local issues in addition to national when they choose paper topics.” —Brandon Alva

“Students in one of my courses do a primary research project to investigate the literacy practices of a cultural, social, or linguistic community that they identify with.” —Joanne Baird Giordano

“I encourage students in 1010 to engage with a Consumer Culture theme and consider how their consumption practices may or may not support global, environmental, social (etc.) welfare.” —Christie Bogle

“In English 2010 Online Plus, our students each pick a local social issue to focus on for the semester, and issue locality forms a large part of their research. For their 2nd major project, a profile, they interview a community member connected to their issue.” —Benjamin Solomon

“Integrating social justice concepts and conversations into examples and process work for each of the major projects, encouraging students to direct their attention to how rhetoric works with civic engagement.” —Chris Blankenship

“We examine the sociopolitical contexts in which the stories, essays, etc., that we engage with in the classroom are situated, and then we discuss how these contexts are also local (not just national and global). We also discuss ‘where is the environment’ in these materials, in our work, etc.?” —Kati Lewis

“For the second portfolio in English 1010, students choose a social issue they are passionate about and are personally invested in, construct a research question, and research it. The project culminates in a position paper.” —Cris Longhurst

Student Voices

Over the last year in my classes we have had to be creative to find opportunities for students to participate in their community. My students have done just about everything from getting involved with the legislative process, volunteering with animal shelters, planting trees with Tree Utah, volunteer coaching for youth leagues, caring for community gardens, and even just volunteering with family and elderly in their communities. They have studied the issues and discovered so much. This also showcases all of the various pathways to civic engagement.

There were many more positive experiences with students stepping out of their comfort zones and finding purpose in their community. Even in this dark time of seclusion and fear, civic engagement has brought a little more light into our lives. Here are a few highlights from student final reflections on their civic engagement. —Jason Roberts

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“The team banquet went well yesterday, and all the parents, coaches, and assistants could tell the players missed each other and the comradery and friendships that were developed while practicing three times a week and playing on game days. All of this is also a very important and a positive factor when it comes to the social aspect of playing youth sports.”

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“Last week was the last day to volunteer for my community service and [I] have gained knowledge working with them. In the beginning, [I] was very shy and spoke little, but after a week I got used to people and would talk to them while working. I learned that a lot of people are in need of help, which is why volunteering is so important. It made me more aware that education, literacy, and the community are important because they can give you skills to earn money to help others.”

“I learned that it is important to respect other people, especially if they are older or younger than you. I learned how important it is to listen to older people even if they are not in school. I also learned that it is important that everyone in the community learns regardless of their background, including genders, races, classes, and opinions on things. Also, I would like to say thank you for making me feel comfortable in this community service I knew nothing about before starting.”

“With my civic engagement I've been going to the Best Friends Animal Society at Sugarhouse for the last two months. Although I probably already went for more than 15 hours, I really enjoy going and spending time with dogs and cats. I have learned lots of new things in dog and cat care. Honestly in the beginning of the semester I thought it was a little annoying to spend my weekends at the shelter, but I turned out to like it a lot.”

“My civic engagement continues to be very important to me, and now that there is evidence that shows that volunteering increases my life expectancy and that helping other people helps me find my own purpose and congratulations, I think that in addition to enjoying it, I have a reward.”

“My civic engagement is going fairly well; I have been miraculously keeping my pollinator plants alive through this awful drought. I have also been visiting my grandmother biweekly, which has been lovely. I have been able to help her out and make her let me do her dishes while I am there. The only thing I am frustrated about with my civic engagement is that I feel like I do not have time for anything. Everything tends to happen ALL AT ONCE and it just does not stop.”

“I am continuing on with the same work of helping plant strawberries, tuber vegetables which are vegetables that grow with modified plant structures like roots and stems typically underground, and more which are all starting to become in season. From that, they have taught me more ways of how to care for the plants each individually like how much water and attention they need, how much sunlight, what type of soil to use, what type of structure or enclosure to keep them in, fertilizer, etc. They have also taught me how to tell when different fruits and veggies are ripe and ready to harvest, what fruits and vegetables are in season and when to start planting different fruits and veggies. Which overall, has been really interesting and fun to learn being that I want to start my own garden someday and/or help with my parents garden over the summer. I have also been still helping distribute the food to the elders which has been fun seeing all of their faces light up when they get the freshly grown food, which they'll take home and nourish their families and themselves with. Though I have been having fun doing the planting, I hope to expand my volunteering and start fruit sharing, which is where you get to harvest and distribute fruits to the community that otherwise would go to waste.”

“[I] learned a lot about trees, and what goes into gardens in my time with Tree Utah. I have my own house plants, but I do not have to weed or keep up with a garden. I didn't realize how much work it is, and how much time and energy goes into it. I'm glad I will be better prepared when one day I have my own outdoor garden to keep up on. I also didn't realize how much work it is to plant a tree, especially one that is much bigger than a tiny sapling. I learned that there are a lot more people than I would've thought who volunteer their time to organizations like Tree Utah, and I think that is

beautiful.”

“For my civic engagement this week, I took some food to my high school. I had a lot of canned food which was going to waste, so I decided to donate it to the homeless pantry at hunter high.”

“As far as my civic engagement, the current legislative session has come to a close as far as current police reform bills being considered. Some passed, most didn't. The ones that did are reasonable; the ones that didn't are a good thing in my opinion, but they will be presented again next year so staying involved is a constant.”

“I have become more acquainted with the civic commitment through this class. I had very little experience with volunteering service at the beginning of this semester. To my knowledge, civic involvement was voluntary, but not much more. I have discovered with this class that public commitment is more than just voluntary work. What is civic commitment, exactly? Civic participation is when a person or a group of individuals work together to make a positive difference in their society.”

## The Pathways of Public Service and Civic Engagement

The following are the six pathways of public service and civic engagement that describe a range of possibilities by which we can make a contribution to the common good.

- *Community Engaged Learning and Research*: Connecting coursework and academic research to community-identified concerns to enrich knowledge and inform action on social issues.
- *Community Organizing and Activism*: Involving, educating, and mobilizing individual or collective action to influence or persuade others.
- *Direct Service*: Working to address the immediate needs of individuals or a community, often involving contact with the people or places being served.
- *Philanthropy*: Donating or using private funds or charitable contributions from individuals or institutions to contribute to the public good.
- *Policy and Governance*: Participating in political processes, policymaking, and public governance.
- *Social Entrepreneurship and Corporate Social Responsibility*: Using ethical business or private sector approaches to create or expand market-oriented responses to social or environmental problems.

### The Pathways of Public Service and Civic Engagement:

- have local, national and international audiences and populations of interest.
- are imbedded in all careers in the public, private and independent sectors, and not limited to any segment of the economy.
- require different but interconnected actions: education through community dialogue, direct provision of goods or services, statements and actions that support social justice and address inequities, creation of new knowledge, and development of resources that support the work.
- are problem based, not discipline bound.
- result in measurable community impact.

Source: Haas Center for Public Service, Stanford University (See QR code.)

