



# COMMUNITY ORGANIZING & SOCIAL JUSTICE

3RD ANNUAL JUSTICE FESTIVAL  
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# My work in Social Justice



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- Define Social Justice
  - Define community organizing
  - How we can be community organizers in our own way
  - Questions and answers

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# What is Social Justice?



## What is Social Justice?

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“Social Justice is about understanding and interrogating how different individuals or groups are faring in comparison with others in a specific context (university or society)”

Wilson-Strydom (2015)

## What is Social Justice?

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“Social justice is the view that everyone deserves equal economic, political and social rights and opportunities”

United Nations (2022)



# Social Conditions of Injustice

- Oppression and Domination
- Five Faces of Oppression
  - Exploitation
  - Marginalization
  - Powerlessness
  - Cultural imperialism
  - Violence

*Young (1990)*





# Injustices in our Communities

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- Economic challenges – unemployment
- Food insecurity
- Poverty in our schools – kids on free and reduced lunch
- Inadequate housing
- Racial issues
- Opiod epidemic
- Health disparity – high rates of cancer (lung & colon)
- Access to Resources (Internet)



# Why Engage in Social Justices in our Communities?

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“..... We need to become involved as if our lives depended on it because, in truth, they do.” —Anne Braden



# Community Organizing in Higher Education

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- Does not includes tactics like mass mobilization, confrontation, and demonstrations for the sake of addressing specific issues.
- “Is focused on practices that can help bring about long-term social and cultural transformation through a slow, reciprocal, relational process.”

Avila, M., Knoerr, A., Orlando, N, & Castillo, C. (2010)



# Community Organizing Through Community Engagement

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Community engagement describes the collaboration between 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.

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching



## Community Engagement

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- Community-Engaged Teaching - a pedagogy that explicitly engages students in studying community issues in order to increase students' understanding and application of academic content.
- Community-Engaged Research – the collaboration among faculty, students, and community partners to study and address community concerns/critical community issues

# Community-Engaged Teaching: For Students

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- Service-Learning
- Field Placement
- Internship
- Practicum
- Independent Study
- Capstone and/or Research Project
- Cooperative Work Experience or Co-op





# Key Aspects of Engaged Research

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- Mutually beneficial
- Intentional
- Focused
- Have clear goals
- Have measured outcomes
- Impact - Define what impact means not only for the institution but also for the partners and the community
- Think collaborations → trans-disciplinary research



# Community-engaged vs Community-based

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Community-Engaged	Community-Based
Campus and community share decision-making power	Campus holds decision-making power
Campus and community co-define problems and co-create goals and outcomes	Campus defines the problems, goals, and outcomes
Asset-based: strengths, skills, and knowledge of those in the community are validated and legitimized	Campus knowledge prioritized
Morales, American Council on Education, ACE, 2023	



# Redefining Promotion & Tenure Process

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- Revise promotion & tenure guidelines to account for the fact that it takes time and resources to build partnerships and conduct Community Engaged Scholarship (CES)
- Ensure promotion & tenure guidelines demonstrate that CES is as valued as other forms of scholarship
- Emphasize rigor, quality, and impact of CES products rather than number and timing
- Consider impact both within and beyond the academy
- Measure public impact through altmetrics, media coverage, use of research by community partners, policy changes, and more



*Sara Goodkind, University of Pittsburgh, (2022)*

# Assessing Impact to Demonstrate Value

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- Community Impact and connection to the community
- Student Impact
- Impact on faculty
  - teaching and scholarship
  - Number and types of scholarly products
  - Grants
- Impact on the institution
  - Change in institutional culture
  - Federal grants tied to community engagement
  - Philanthropic contributions tied to or resulting from community engagement
  - Community perception



# Conclusion

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- Community Organizing
- Community Engagement
- Assessing Impact
  - **We are understanding the issues of inequality and taking steps to address them**
    - **That is Social Justice**

# Discussion

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## Questions and Answers



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