



CENTER FOR CIVIC
ENGAGEMENT

Engaged Liberal Arts and Sciences

ONLINE LEARNING HANDBOOK: METHODOLOGIES, TOOLS AND BEST PRACTICES FROM SPRING 2020

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ENGAGED LEARNING DURING A PANDEMIC

Engaged Liberal Arts and Sciences (ELAS) courses bring theory to practice by linking coursework, critical thinking, and engagement activities. A form of experiential learning, ELAS courses allow students to test ideas in the real world and develop creative approaches to social, cultural, and scientific issues. A significant portion of ELAS learning takes place outside of the classroom: students learn through engagement with different geographies, organizations, and programs in the surrounding communities or in collaboration with partners from Bard's national and international networks. ELAS students and teachers often collaborate with non-profits, community groups, and government agencies whose goal is to serve the public good.

ELAS teachers often find themselves mediating multiple projects, organizing guest speakers and leading innovative activities, while also remaining engaged within the community. An effective engaged learning experience pairs a typical theory-based classroom environment with contemporary realities in a way that builds students' skills and life experiences while benefiting community-based organizations and local populations.

Experiential Learning, which forms the pedagogic basis of ELAS, is a pedagogical method through which students develop knowledge, skills, and values from direct experiences outside of a traditional academic setting. It encompasses individual and group projects in local communities, internships, research, study abroad, and other creative and professional work experiences. Well-planned, supervised, and assessed experiential learning opportunities can stimulate academic inquiry by contextualizing class materials, encouraging interdisciplinary learning, and promoting civic engagement, while fostering cultural awareness, leadership, and other professional skills.

Halfway through the Spring 2020 semester, Bard College, along with schools throughout the world, closed its campus and began working remotely by integrating online learning approaches. ELAS classes were no exception. While some classes were able to transition coursework more fluidly, others, particularly those centered around internships and community interactions, faced a number of challenges. This handbook reflects on several spring 2020 ELAS courses and how they adapted civic and other engagement activities and project-based coursework in an online environment. The product was tremendous innovation and adaptation and, in many cases, greater engagement outside of the classroom. Below we provide a sample of approaches and assignments witnessed in ELAS courses that can serve as a model of future engagement.

Spring 2020 ELAS Courses:

Doing Ethnography

Gregory Morton

Doing Ethnography is a methods course where students work on a semester-long research project at a field site which they then develop into ethnographic text. While the text itself can vary depending on

student interest and accessibility to their field site, the path to creating an effective ethnography involves a series of smaller assignments such as an IRB proposal, mapping a field site, and interviews. The COVID-19 pandemic allowed students to reimagine the way ethnographies are produced and what they are about. We have highlighted some notable projects below:

A group of students launched a website, The [Anthropology of Human Interaction, Media, Consumption and Institutional Responses to COVID-19](https://anthrocollaboration.wixsite.com/anthrocollaboration). The website acted as a way of recording this historical moment through videos, pictures and stories. Through new methods of collaboration with classmates and outside anthropologists, the website made online learning a “more fulfilling experience,” according to one student. The Global Response to COVID-19 website can be found using the following link: <https://anthrocollaboration.wixsite.com/anthrocollaboration>

Another student decided to focus on autoethnography with and about their partner. The ethnography was not a representation of the family as the student saw it, but was done through the interpretive lens of how an ethnographer sees how their partner sees their family. This project speaks to the importance of connecting storytelling as a narrative to the multiple forms of engagement decided by students and the people in their field site. By creating their own terms of engagement, students can have a more fulfilling ELAS experience.

Toward pandemic response on a social level, one student looked toward Black student leaders on Bard’s campus, how they interact with the campus, and what the campus means to them. This project engaged with a different narrative form: a survey. Through specific interactions and questions with Bard’s community, the student realized how much Black student leaders work on Bard’s campus, and how the emotional aspect of their work cannot be quantified. Furthermore, recognizing the invisible labor that student workers do, the student asked: why is it that we feel so much burnout/urgency during times of crisis? The ethnography became a reflection of how labor contributions do not allow for the practice of self-care.

Other ethnography projects utilized core methods of observation and communication which include:

- The relationship between B&G workers eating at DTR among students of the College, and the optical aspects of the “college experience.”
- An analysis of Taste Budd’s Cafe in its forms as a coffee shop and open mic night area, and how spaces change and what those changes mean for the patrons, employees, musicians.
- Dinner parties at Bard as an act of creation and conversation as to what defines a dinner party. Intentionality as a performance that defines and produces the dinner parties themselves.
- An off-campus living arrangement known as the “Ghost Frat,” with an “open invitation” to parties and social gatherings. While many Bard students left their dorms or apartments to return home, most residents of the “Ghost Frat” continued to live there and attract new roommates.
- The Kline experience as one that prepares people for the real world. Students use Kline’s food

choices and quality as ways to reminisce with friends about home-cooked food. Endless servings and choices also provide a moment of nostalgia for students who miss aspects of that experience as they share memories and jokes via social media.

Reflection assignments included weekly reading responses posted to Google classroom followed by in-class discussions.

Historical Archaeology

Chris Lindner

A typical Historical Archaeology class finds students at either the Maple Avenue Parsonage in Germantown, NY or at an Indigenous site near Bard's baseball field. Before students first touch trowel to earth, the professor gives a number of assignments to prepare future excavators in the theories and methodologies of archaeology. Textbooks, for example, can be imagined as an excavation site, with chapters and paragraphs representing various test pits that provide contextual information to tell a complete story. Given the history of Bard's archaeology program, and the large collection of artifacts and data that have been compiled over the years, the COVID-19 pandemic provided an opportunity for current students to reflect on the work of their colleagues from years prior. Students worked with and excavated Bard Archaeology's website, treating this digital sphere like a field site itself by looking at information, how it is contextualized, and what it communicates to its audience.

As the semester progressed, students turned themselves into subjects of archaeological study by interpretation and representation of their own surroundings. In an online seminar the class sequenced their presentations by distancing outward from a part of the campus they all knew. Three were sheltering at or near Bard; one was sheltered westward in the Catskills Mountains; a fifth was eastward near the coast of Rhode Island; a sixth was far to the south near the Gulf of Mexico, outside Houston; the last was by the Pacific coast in suburban Los Angeles. By this intra-continental convergence, the class learned how each member of a dig crew relates to others from a unique perspective, communicating a personal environment. The College's safety measures against the viral spread, blocked students from actually digging and analyzing physical discoveries, so the class instead got to witness how prior students presented their excavation techniques and discoveries through video, still photographs, and brief analytic texts that those students had prepared to illustrate various aspects of how the project was conducted in other seasons. The class responded by being consistently in attendance, completing the assignment, and participating with enthusiasm, thoughtfulness, and insight. Part of the assignment was to discuss via Zoom seminars how such approaches could serve future learning experiences, both for undergraduates in the course but also younger students, such as the sixth-graders with whom the class had planned to work. Students realized their historic positionality during the pandemic and reflected upon their surroundings, first in writing and then by way of maps, photos, and sketches. They addressed the question one might ponder in the future: Where were you when the initial withdrawal from in-person interactions began, as the global pandemic hit hard in North America?

Bard's Archaeology website: <https://www.bard.edu/archaeology/>

Reflection assignments consisted of weekly papers oriented around a discussion topic that was interwoven between in-class and fieldsite activities.

Anthropology of the Institution: Making Change through Social Service and Community Organizing

Gregory Morton

This course, which consists primarily of internships with a number of community-based organizations around the Hudson Valley, offers a unique chance for students to acquire certificates in mental health training, crisis hotline response, elderly care, tutoring/mentorship, and other forms of experience that open up career opportunities. However, this is predicated on the human connection between people in physical spaces. The COVID-19 pandemic challenged the way a course like this operates for the instructor, students, and community partners. While some organizations with sensitive populations, like Ferncliff Nursing Home, were no longer able to open their doors to students because of the potential risks, not all hope was lost. Many students created new projects in a short amount of time by pairing with community organizations that needed even more help due to the pandemic. Students remained committed to their semester-long engagement internships with several local community partners and swiftly pivoted their projects to serve the community during the COVID-19 disruption.

Students' projects included:

- A video of musical performances and instruction with students from George Washington Elementary from a Bard conservatory student. By using a webcam platform to chat with children about their musical preferences, this project revealed how young students express themselves musically while also making a personal connection. View George Washington Elementary students' musical responses here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8a1S22aUfC4&feature=youtu.be>
- A book-making project with George Washington Elementary students which consisted of two half-hour lessons per week, over the course of three weeks, dedicated to writing and illustrating. The project was designed around a system of connecting with students by allowing creative expression and open, supportive sharing. By the end, three full books were completed with more on the way as the elementary school students prepared for summer vacation.
- An infographic of 10 Tips on How to Approach Remote Learning. This information was compiled through a survey of BHSEC students to address their experiences and thoughts on remote learning. While tutoring a BHSEC sophomore, the ELAS student noticed that their tutee

and peers felt stuck in a new learning environment that was confusing and hectic. The infographic was created to not only cohesively address remote learning, but self-care strategies as well.

- A community virtual screening of the documentary, *Care* via an internship with Caring Majority. Through Zoom screenings and discussion, the ELAS student learned networking skills while navigating coronavirus concerns. While the movie screening focused on the reality of aging, this project also created a platform for attendees to speak their thoughts on affected populations, grim news, and what it means to be vulnerable during a pandemic.
- Two students collaborated on work with Ulster Immigrant Defense Network (UIDN) to create a client database which consisted of an intake form, needs assessment, and urgent requests. This shareable model was created to assist with helping immigrant families with services, meet deadlines for bills and documents, and be known as members of Ulster's community.
- Family of Woodstock, a longtime partner with this course, allowed students to continue staffing their hotlines remotely. One student used their reflection assignments to create a narrative project that expressed how they felt during these phone conversations. Describing them as "powerful" and "emotional," this project touches on the subject of what it is like sharing stories with someone whom they may never likely meet. Similarly, another student worked with a Crisis Text Line that allowed people to connect via text messages.

Reflection assignments included weekly reading responses followed by in-class discussions, and small group meetings regarding project coordination.

Urban Oceanography

Eli Dueker

As a cross-listed biology course, Urban Oceanography is ultimately rooted in collaboration with schools from coastal megacities such as the New York Harbor School. As one of the nation's most affected regions by COVID-19, New York City increasingly became a sensitive topic to discuss in terms of classroom collaboration and community engagement. The question came up time and time again: how can we collaborate with a place and population with which we cannot be physically present? Using tools for digital interaction and resource sharing, Bard students continued partaking in research projects with students at the New York Harbor School to learn about the concrete interplay between environmental racism and water quality in megacities like New York City and beyond.

Reflection assignments included reading responses and contributions to "Oceans in the News," a Google Drive folder, followed by presentations and comments on their contributions.

Waste Cluster

Ellen Driscoll, Eli Dueker and Sophia Stamatopoulou-Robbins

In an effort to conceptualize class linkages to topics that students care about, the Waste Cluster courses combine science with art and anthropology (each as a separately taught, but cohesively directed, course) as it tackles the subject of managing waste. Rooted in the notion that complicated problems require creative solutions, these courses provide a wide array of class meetings, workshops, assignments, and final projects that specifically address broad global issues. Students worked within their communities back home to create a class Air Haiku which will show what air does and how it moves within different communities. These words were shown via an animated short.



Air Haiku by Eli McClatchy

Reflection assignments included meetings and interviews with community leaders, regional environmental organizations, and government officials about waste treatment policies.

Hudson Valley Cities/Environmental (In)Justice

Peter Klein

One of the pillars of engaged learning is the symbiosis between classroom theory and application in the real world. While many classes propel this effort by integrating certain readings as they relate to community concerns, other projects manifest themselves organically. That is the case with the Hudson Valley Cities course. One of the many jarring realizations that emerged from COVID-19 was the immense vulnerability that urban communities face during a pandemic: food/shelter insecurity, clean resources, or even comprehensive health education are just a few classroom theories that were quickly realized as the College and nation drifted into a new reality. A number of projects changed and emerged as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Because this course specifically focuses on a local community, students took action to address how that community changed in early 2020. Projects included:

1. Community Conversation Toolkits

Students were tasked with an ongoing project of how to communicate effectively and mindfully with community partners and the people involved. By flipping the notion of classroom expertise, and allowing Hudson Valley residents and leaders to speak for themselves on issues like the housing crisis, conversations opened students up to experiences of community solidarity and compassion. Digital platforms like Zoom offer unique opportunities for community conversation toolkits by keeping

community members informed and allowing feedback to innovate discussions. Conversations revolved around social justice issues like food security and housing.

"Kingston Community Conversation Toolkit: Let's Talk Housing" by Julia Gloninger, Jack Kaplan, Misbah Awan, and Danielle Ranieri

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1W5cIvEW6fr90VR3IcdliRwnekJ6t3Jcn/view?usp=sharing>

"Open Table: A Community Dinner Series" by Bri Alphonso Gibbs and Eva Johnson

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fVPPXQFu5V-db3eppSbJ9RWqqsdvZVrc/view?usp=sharing>

"People's Place Project Roadmap" by Tessa Greenhalgh

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1WY6BzNv079b-kBzQqboZaly0id3nOIU/view?usp=sharing>

2. Ulster Immigrant Defense Network (UIDN)

UIDN emerged as an early partner with ELAS courses because of the need to address and improve connections with Ulster's immigrant communities. Hudson Valley Cities students worked with UIDN leaders in the Kingston area to create databases in order to organize information and address the growing need for online interaction necessary in pandemic responses. These databases can then be used to allocate various needs like food, sanitary supplies, and education materials. According to one student, "[UIDN] pushes you forward, and makes you want to be involved even more."

3. Thrive On! Kingston

It is not uncommon for ELAS projects to evolve beyond the scope of one course in a single semester. Thrive On! Kingston is an example of student empowerment fed through the opportunities and experiences that ELAS lends itself to. Students involved with this project found themselves facing the reality of injustices that were theorized and discussed in the course, and wanted to do something about it. As a resource distribution project, Thrive On! Kingston mobilized and organized students to distribute handmade masks, socks, toothpaste, detergent, and anything necessary for at-risk communities. Students also involved themselves in fundraising activities earning more than enough to fulfill two full rotations of Kingston shelters. "It gave me a sense of purpose," recalls one student.

Reflection assignments included weekly posts to Moodle about neighborhood city change and environmental injustice. Rotating groups of students were then expected to lead a classroom discussion on the readings, their relevance to outside conversations, and questions for the classroom to consider.

Art and Climate Change

Adriane Colburn and Ellen Driscoll

Prior to leaving campus, students created climate change posters which were printed and posted in the campus center for students to view on campus. For the remainder of the semester, students' work pivoted to focus on assignments in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and not being able to work with others in the classroom.

Based on the work of the French artist, JR, students researched species that are going extinct, creating art that isolates the eyes of these species and producing zines about them for the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. Each student received a set of 50 species stickers and zines which they distributed and displayed within their local communities and captured via photographs. The purpose was to explore the place and agency of where the extinction species stickers and zines land as they watch the communities during the COVID-19 disruption.

Reflection assignments included weekly readings followed by creative responses and class critiques.

Mathematics: Puzzles & Games

Silvia Sacoon

While many ELAS courses touch on personal issues like social justice, environmental concerns, or public policy, its implementation as a pedagogical practice is limitless. Puzzles & Games is both a math and ELAS course that aims to break down mathematical theory in an accessible way that is replicable and practical. This course is one that involves equal parts learning and teaching for not just the instructor, but the students and community members involved with the course. Students worked on creating virtual engagement math game sessions which teach local K-12 students the art of the Rubik's Cube and Set while exploring how such games can strengthen K-12 students at home learning practices.

As the class shifted to remote learning, student engagement remained concentrated on how to teach mathematical concepts in a digital space. Final project presentations were hosted on Zoom and featured breakout sessions led by student presenters to teach mathematical strategies to popular games. These sessions consisted of a small group of three to four students participating in math games like Ken Ken, Lines and Boxes, and others followed by class discussions and Q&A regarding the presentation.

Reflections assignments included developing lesson plans and leading mathematics activities for recurring events throughout the semester.

Local Community Currencies

Leanne Ussher

Given the rise of community currencies in places like Puerto Rico, or the digital cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, this course emerged as a way of imagining the nuanced economical ways we integrate ourselves in our communities. This course examined the rise in alternative currencies by grass roots organizations such as the Hudson Valley Current, to confront market-based capitalism. While learning the design principles of making a new currency, students analyzed and visualized data from local currency networks by programming in Mathematica and working alongside community leaders. Students

personally selected communities to work with because of inequitable practices and marginalization that spoke to their own interests. While the original plan involved working with communities in person, given the COVID-19 pandemic, these personal partnerships, and the kumus that came from them, had to change into virtual forms of engagement:

Improving on the [O+ Music Festival](#) which exchanges music for wellness services, one student proposed a voucher system that would allow musicians to earn and store credits. Musicians could use credits over the year in their location, rather than just the 3 days during the annual festival in Kingston. An interactive Kumu map of all O+ wellness providers was created, which could be the building blocks for an interactive app for musicians and wellness providers to trade, state or nation wide, “the art of medicine for the medicine of art”.

<https://kumu.io/sawyersshadow/o-festival#providers-2016-2019?focus=%23elem-mvzZUHZZ%20out%201>

Member countries of the European Union do not have independence in their monetary policy and so they cannot devalue their currency or expand credit, to stimulate demand, autonomous from the European Central Bank. One student’s project proposed the re-creation of national currencies that would complement Euros. Each EU member country would offer a mutual credit platform for citizens called Tauro. The platform could also issue Tauros based on a fractional reserve of Euros. Based on the reserve amount the exchange rate of Tauros would be algorithmically determined by a ‘bonding curve’, to equilibrate trade between different member nations. This student’s ideas build upon the Sarafu network, a successful blockchain community currency that circulates among informal sectors around Nairobi, Kenya.

<https://kumu.io/FranBib/tauros-software>

One ELAS student took as a starting point the Bard Wellness Team campus food pantry delivery system during the Spring 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, and suggested it should be decentralized into pantry and network pods to reduce contagion and distribute workload. They also wanted to gamify idle Bard Bucks which could finance the pantry workers and circulate among students virtually to create an ecosystem of student trading of live music, tutoring, food delivery on campus, Bard buddy networks etc. They began an interactive Kumu network for visual presentation of her network.

<https://embed.kumu.io/1027c9cb0d5eb8f18eb181b9682eb8c1#distributed-network>

A student designed a local music currency to establish the Hudson Valley as a musical-cultural center and a place where musicians can work for a living wage. This currency, inspired by a depression complementary currency from 1932 - the Worgl - includes a demurrage or rate of deterioration to promote spending. The currency is issued and managed by a newly created musician union, that would match venues with musicians, maintaining a living wage and full employment of musicians. The new currency was effectively backed by music and would gamify the tourist ecosystem and create a musical

identity and appeal of Hudson Valley as a tourist and musician destination - an arts hub with its own sound.

<https://kumu.io/CrosbySpagnoli/music-circuit>

As an extension upon the Hudson Valley Current local currency, one student designed a new circulation system in the Ponckhockie neighborhood of Kingston called the Satisfy Hunger Green Grocer. Inspired by the Curitiba local currency in Brazil, they proposed to institute food security through the spending and earning of Currents. By taking donations of (expiring) fruits and vegetables from local grocers, selling them at a discount in USDs to Ponckhockie residents along with 1 Current for every 2 USDs spent. The Currents could then be spent or donated towards community initiatives such as a local bus service. They began an interactive Kumu network for visual presentation of the network.

<https://kumu.io/keyvious/ponck-hockie>

Reflection assignments came in the form of datasets assigned through Mathematica as a way of learning how to program through the software and assist other students in doing the assignments.

Climate & Agroecology

Jennifer Phillips

This course examines the linkages between agroecosystems and the climate system. By engaging in both lectures and weekly experiments in a soils lab, students contextualized the role of regenerative agriculture and soil health in addressing climate change concerns.

Students visited Heermance Farm in Tivoli in early February testing some of the soil health assessment protocols with the farmer and his assistants at Heermance. The students had also produced a sixty-page soils report using the USDA/ NRCS Websoils software documenting the soil parameters of interest to give to the farmer. After we completed our soil tests with the farmer, they gave us a tour of the greenhouses. This trip not only allowed us to field test some of the protocols the Land Lab is developing, it also helped to build a relationship with a farmer “in our own backyard”.

In lieu of the hands-on lab work the students would have completed this semester, they wrote an assessment of the soils protocols being developed in the land lab, including some discussion of the degree to which they are useful and appropriate for farmers to use on their own, one of the objectives of the Land Lab team. The visit to the farm in Tivoli was helpful for the students to have some perspective on what matters to farmers and what the limitations might be in an on-farm context.

View the Heermance Farms Soils Report here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/12wV3tYv1Pk8xauSR6brd1u7Z3p2Xd3ro/view?usp=sharing>

Reflection assignments included weekly readings and posts to Moodle followed by student research and labs.

What Have We Learned?

Engaged Learning works efficiently when it focuses on a specific need. Engagement can entail different levels of intensity: it does not all require internships, daily action, or solving the world's greatest problems (try as we may to do such things). Some of the most "successful" courses have been those that hone in on a direct question that may be difficult to cover entirely in a classroom environment: the role of institutions; how fermentation works; mapping police violence; or how neighborhood communities operate.

Consistency helps. "There's a part of this class that is the best part of my week, every week," says one anthropology student. During the transition to online learning, challenges not only emerged as to how to keep the coursework going but also how to keep students engaged and raise morale. Faculty opted for more check-ins and digital office hours, and also allowed students more control in shaping their final projects. Students, likewise, orchestrated more virtual meetings with their classmates, developed breakout sessions for final presentations, and some even identified ways to continue their projects once the semester was over.

Levels of Engagement

Projects can be imagined in different levels of engagement depending on the student or medium utilized:

High: Where students are deeply involved with their project to the point they may be travelling, working with different mediums, addressing difficult or controversial topics, and/or can grow their project into something bigger and sustainable for future collaborations.

Classes that have integrated this approach include: Peter Klein's Hudson Valley Cities: Environmental (In)Justice; Gregory Morton's Anthropology of Institutions; Leanna Ussher's Local Currencies; Chris Lindner's Historical Archaeology; Josh Livingston's Placemaking: Mission-Center Design; Maggie Hazen and Dave McKenzie's Extended Media II: This Class is a Podcast

Project examples include: Fundraising/advocacy for a community organization; Implementing a digital platform to assist with teaching or tutoring practices; Creating currencies to imagine new ways of

socioeconomic community interaction; Recording and building upon interviews conducted by students for community partners; Historical tours and workshops for Bard or Germantown; Building a sustainable space for creativity and potential employment for students; A sound project that focuses on verbal/non-verbal perspectives on thematic areas.

Mid: These projects can still develop practical skills, help communities, and provide a different level of thinking and learning without an intense fieldwork experience. Projects that include breakout activities, presentations, story writing and conversations, or team-based research all offer opportunities to positively impact classroom learning while developing students' individual talents.

Classes that have integrated this approach include: Adriane Colburn and Ellen Driscoll's Art and Climate Change; Robyn Smyth's EUS 102 and Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration; Jonathan Becker and Erin Cannan's Engaged Citizenship: Civic Engagement Locally, Nationally, and Globally; Eli Dueker's (Urban) Oceanography; Carol Murray's Pedagogy and Practice; Deirdre d'Albertis and Cammie Jones' Women and Leadership.

Project examples include: Community Conversation Toolkits; a Care Conference; and the Women and Leadership Summit.

A mid-stakes course can also create a two-part assignment that connects students to the community and builds class engagement around a specific subject. For example, from Jonathan Becker and Erin Cannan's Civic Engagement Course):

Part 1: Reading Assignment

Based on the Dalton reading, what does it mean to be a good citizen in _____ ?

Students submit a one-page summary (50-100 words) in Google Classroom/Padlet for others to see and respond.

Part 2: Class Linkages

Students in class will be split into groups, answer prompts connected to Assignment 1 and then present to the entire group (all based on assignment one). Prompts include:

- What does it mean to be a good citizen? (identify 3-5)
- What did you see in other students' descriptions that surprised you or you disagree with?
- What factors (geography, culture, history) do you think contribute to your understanding of what it means to be a good citizen. Provide examples.

Low: Students briefly focus for one to two weeks over the course of a semester on a specific assignment or topic connected with the course, community, and/or social justice issue. These classes allow for more time on readings and discussions, but invite expertise from other community leaders, or allow classrooms into the community.

Classes that have integrated this approach include: Silvia Sacoon’s Mathematics of Puzzles & Games; David Woolner’s US-Russian Relations and the Founding of the UN; Maria Cecire’s Falling in Love; Swapan Jain’s Art & Science of Fermentation; Gabriel Perron’s Food Microbiology: Cider Making

Project examples include: A final paper or presentation reflecting on a guest speaker or site of engagement and its relevance to course theory; Putting course theory into practice by flipping the classroom and having each student present on a theoretical framework and how it could be used to address a community need

Assignment examples include:

- Hosting a Zoom chat with a local official, community leader, or expert in the field connected with the course
- An image assignment exploring a reading topic in depth. Students can use images to answer questions like how does the image relate in some way to the subject at hand, and then upload it to a joint page on the Padlet. Students add three hashtags to their image and write a 300- to 600-word statement that explains how the image engages with practices, policies, and/or discourses of the specific topic or project. Once all course participants upload their images and accompanying statements to the Padlet, students can read their peers’ contributions and discuss them in detail via a video call.

In-class example:

- From the Civic Engagement course: After reading about public response to disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, the class will host a discussion with New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell to talk about her role as a community member and elected official.
- From the Puzzles & Games course: Pick a math puzzle (like Ken-Ken, Dots and Boxes, Sudoku, etc.) to design yourself so that you can then explain its mathematical strategies to a group of people during a games workshop at the Tivoli Library.

Course Design Examples

The ELAS program utilizes the following course design elements:

1. Backward Design

From Vanderbilt University and *Understanding by Design* (Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe), “the backward design approach has instructors consider the learning goals of the course first. These learning goals embody the knowledge and skills instructors want their students to have learned when they leave the course. Once the learning goals have been established, the second stage involves consideration of assessment. The backward design framework suggests that instructors should consider these overarching learning goals and how students will be assessed

prior to consideration of how to teach the content.”

2. Flipping the Classroom

From University of Washington, “Flipping the classroom (also known as “inverting” a classroom) is a ‘pedagogy-first’ approach to teaching in which course materials are introduced outside of class, and in-class time is re-purposed for inquiry, application, and assessment in order to better meet the needs of individual learners.”

Models of Engaged Teaching

Discipline Based

Consistency is key. This model retains the notion that students should have a consistent, engaging presence in the community so as to understand and/or apply theoretical discussions that occur in the classroom.

Course Examples

- Peter Klein’s Hudson Valley Cities: Environmental (In)Justice: By working specifically with Kingston, and its community organizations, students gained insight on the local operations of a nearby city. Visits to the classroom by community leaders, as well as students frequently exploring Kingston, contextualized class readings in tangible, realistic ways. Students also partook in several community conversations with local non profit leaders and community activists to thoroughly understand the community with which they were engaging.
- Chris Lindner’s Historical Archeology: Students visited one archaeology site per semester on a weekly basis to engage with not only the artifacts, but the community as well. Students learned about the history of Germantown’s parsonage and/or Bard’s campus from the items they discovered as well as local historians and residents who shared stories about the surrounding areas.
 - Student quote: "The work we did with the local schools aided me in understanding how to encourage others without scientific knowledge of archaeology. Involving the community made the importance of local engagement shine through, especially to inspire the future of the archaeological world"

Problem Based

This model directly addresses and acts on a problem that has been identified by the community and offers a hands on approach. Students use, or develop, their skills so as to help communities solve a problem.

Course Examples

- Kwame Holme's Mapping Police Violence course: Students collaborated on group research projects by using demographic analytical tools and datasets from the Police Data Initiative to collectively generate maps of police violence.
- Kwame Holme's Urban Abandonment: A team of students, referred to in this context as A Housing Justice Lab, worked together to identify properties in the Kingston area owned by LLCs and the relationship between landlords and the tenants and communities in which they own. By geocoding data accessed through public networks, the class posed researchable questions that will dive deeper into which institutions own properties, greater transparency in the Air BnB/Homeaway vacation rental market, and a wider geocoded area of each property parcel in the city of Kingston.
- Duff Morton's Anthropology of Institutions: Students working with Ulster Immigrant Defense Network created a replicable check-in system database of intake forms, needs assessments, and urgent requests with their clients in order to streamline reaching out to individuals or families during COVID-19.
- Peter Klein's Hudson Valley Cities: Environmental (In)Justice: Students created a resource network called Thrive On! Kingston to supply handmade masks, socks, toothpaste, detergent and other essential resources for Kingston residents who do not have access to them; Other teams started community conversation toolkits to express solidarity through dialogues and discussions in order to address the housing crisis and food security.
- Josh Livingston's Placemaking course: Students worked together to reimagine, build, and operate unused spaces/rooms on Bard's campus to meet specific needs of the student body. Students learned "Skill building aspects--real world practical tools to problem solve and achieve goals. Showed me I could do things I wasn't sure I could and develop a relationship with community members I typically would not [meet]"

Capstone or Practicum

Synthesizing understanding. This model is intended for students who already have experience being of service to a community. Courses using this model will ask students to take knowledge and experience they have obtained in the past and apply it toward relevant community work.

EUS Practicum:

The practicum is meant to be an introduction to EUS-related careers and work (such as policy, planning, farming, and design). Primarily as a problem-solving class, the goal of the practicum is to offer students applied and engaged "real world" hands-on experience, working with a practitioner, to better understand how non-academics address problems and leverage systems. Practicums are taught by trained

professionals and faculty, and the problems addressed shift widely. We have found that practicums are most successful when the practitioner is already familiar with Bard's campus, the Hudson Valley, and the goals of the EUS program specifically, as the practicum often involves site visits and guest lectures as well as addressing local issues.

The program faculty strives to schedule and cycle practicums through the focus areas. We have recently taken steps to craft practicums that are more closely tied to Bard's campus and region as a means to leverage our rich natural setting and the vibrant agricultural context of the Hudson Valley. For example, we have held several practicums focusing on the Bard (<http://www.bard.edu/about/sustainability/>) and Montgomery Place (<https://www.bard.edu/montgomeryplace/>) Farms, a practicum focusing on environmental justice in regional urban centers (Hudson, Kingston), and a landscape design practicum re-imagining Bard Campus by more tightly integrating Montgomery Place's natural resources into the campus experience.

Course Examples

- Jon Bowermaster's EUS Practicum: Multi-media Environmental Storytelling: A team approach to storytelling--specifically environmental stories--through film, podcasting, radio, written word, photography and art. The class focused on the Hudson Valley region around Kingston as a place of social and environmental concerns. By connecting with community partners such as Radio Kingston and the Hudson River Maritime Museum, the class orchestrated a public showing in Kingston open to students, faculty, and community members.
 - Topics included the farm-to-table permaculture program at Rhinebeck's Camp Ramapo, air quality, and socially responsible investment on campus.
- Eli Dueker or Robyn Smyth's EUS 300+-level courses: Students, who are often EUS majors, applied prior course knowledge with established partners like the Sawkill Watershed Community (SKWC) toward current issues they are addressing. For example, students from Robyn Smyth's Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration class worked with Bard's Buildings and Grounds department to address the use of road salt during winter storms. After observing high levels of road salt depositing along Bard's waterways, students suggested proposals to recycle the brine pumped from rivers and streams to reduce the use of road salt.

Civic Internship

Equal benefit through reciprocity. This model asks students to dedicate a number of hours per week toward working with and producing something that will benefit a community site. Through classroom reflections and activities, students will be asked to critically think and/or creatively explore an analysis of their internship experiences using discipline-based theories.

Course Examples

- Duff Morton's Anthropology of Institutions: Students were partnered with a local non-profit, community organization, or school to learn from the institution and help create a project that would help fulfill some need determined by that institution.
 - Projects included creative book designing and musical Zoom meetings with students from George Washington Elementary in Kingston, a self-care guide for BHSEC students, and a client database for Ulster Immigrant Defense Network.

Action Research

Learning through methodology. This model is intended for students who have experience and express interest in working with communities. By blending research methods with community advocacy, students develop skills in time management and communications that are necessary for implementing community-centered projects.

Course Examples

- Eli Dueker and Susan Rogers' Writing, Science, and Environmental Issues: the Hudson River: This Big Ideas class is a science and writing-based course that allowed students to read about and experience the environmental issues of the Hudson River first-hand through day-long field trips, and through talks and lab work by and with regional scientists and environmental organizations. Students read extensively about environmental issues past and present of the Hudson River with an emphasis on scientific research and translate those findings into research-based essays.
- Doing Ethnography: As a methods course, Doing Ethnography required students to engage in a semester-long research project on a field site of their choosing. Students read a variety of resources on ethnographic theory and methods while conducting and producing a research project of their own. By working with their chosen field site, getting assistance from the professor and their peers, learning about and submitting an IRB proposal, and engaging with texts students leave the classroom with the skills and knowledge necessary to work mindfully with human subjects.
- Carol Murray's Pedagogy and Practice: As part of Bard's MAT courses available for undergraduates, students with an interest in teaching get an opportunity to learn about and work with a number of different local schools. Based out of Bard's own Abigail Lundquist Botstein Nursery School, Pedagogy and Practice students worked primarily with a younger audience in order to foster skills of empathy, compassion, and care in a reciprocal teaching and learning environment. Students took part in organizing a Care Conference open to all community members who were interested in the topic of care. The conference featured guest speakers, workshops, and conversations. Students learned "Understanding conflict between students, and being able to articulate conversation between the children, and asking them to come up with solutions to solve their problems." Such projects could transition digitally to Zoom meetings that can act in a similar manner as a conference.

Future Opportunities

As a result of our efforts, we have already begun collaborative conversations with the following groups:

Caring Majority <https://www.nycaringmajority.org/>

Julia Solow, julia@domesticemployers.org.

Caring Majority needs us to help with three parts of their campaign. During the week, they do phone banking to seniors, caregivers, and other folks. On Sunday, they hold "virtual gatherings" for the campaign. And on Tuesdays (from 10-11am), they have orientations and planning sessions.

Hudson Valley Mutual Aid (Research project)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/hvmutualaidnetwork/>

Alex Pearl, apearl@bard.edu

The group has founded smaller groups throughout the region. Now they need help to figure out how money is being distributed to "community funds" throughout the region. One or two research-oriented students could help the HV Mutual Aid Network by researching administration of community funds.

Hudson Valley Current (Children's curriculum) <https://hudsonvalleycurrent.org/>

Chris Hewett, chris@hudsonvalleycurrent.org

Hudson Valley Current is an organization that has created a local currency for the Hudson Valley. Their goal is to build tighter bonds between people who make things in our area: artisans, farmers, musicians, and everyone else. They are developing a project called Current Kids, and they want to help developing ideas and a very preliminary curriculum with students.

Ferncliff Nursing Home

Michelle Feller, mfeller@archcare.org

P (845) 516-1673 · M (646) 856-1998

Now ready to accept online-based socialization for people in the nursing home. They have in the past engaged with great energy in art and music creation -- and, in fact, an undergraduate produced an exhibit on Bard's campus to showcase the artwork of Ferncliff residents.

George Washington Elementary

Felipa Gaudet, fgaudet@kingstoncityschools.org

This Kingston public school has wonderfully guided Bard interns as they help set up online activities for Felipa's first-through-third-grade students

Ulster Immigrant Defense Network

Nic Abramson, nicabramson@gmail.com
(888) 726-7276 or (845) 706-5500

This organization is very much in need of Spanish-speaking volunteers for their hotline, and also possibly non-Spanish-speaking volunteers for food delivery and other tasks.

Additional Resources

[Nonprofits and Coronavirus](#)

[Remote teaching resources](#)

[11 Teaching-Focused Things to Consider When Moving Your Course Online \(Connecticut College Center for Teaching and Learning\)](#)

[Humanizing Online Teaching \(Drs. Mary Raygoza, Raina León, and Aaminah Norris from Saint Mary's College of California\):](#)
<https://digitalcommons.stmarys-ca.edu/school-education-faculty-works/1805/>

[Resources for wellness, collective care, and anti-racism amidst concerns for COVID-19](#)

[Humanities Coronavirus Syllabus](#)