

Community-Based Learning Placement Guide
MONT 117S
Spring 2021

About Community-Based Learning (CBL) in MONT 117S:

CBL is a teaching strategy to broaden and deepen your learning through connecting you to community engagement opportunities that align with your course goals. Through interacting with community-based agencies or through creating your own community engagement project, you will have the opportunity to learn more deeply about your course content through applying course content to your community engagement and to reflecting on how your community engagement informs and enhances your course content. Through your service, you will also work to meet community-identified needs and goals, learn more about the community in which you are serving, and more. Learn more about Community-Based Learning on the CBL website: holycross.edu/cbl.

Virtual CBL Office Hours for MONT 117S Students:

If you have questions about the community engagement opportunities available to you or would like to discuss your idea for a project, sign on to the virtual CBL Office Hours to speak with the Donelan Office about your options:

- Thursday, February 4th, 3-4pm EST
- Friday, February 5th, 9-10am EST
- Zoom information: <https://holycross.zoom.us/j/949154245>
- If these times do not work with your schedule, contact communitybasedlearning@holycross.edu to set up a different time.

How to sign up for your community engagement opportunity:

First, review the [virtual volunteering opportunities](#) on the Civitas website and this CBL Placement Guide. You will learn more about volunteering with a Worcester-based agency and gain ideas about developing your own CBL experience. Please note that your first choice is not guaranteed, so it is important to consider all of your options and have a few ideas in mind.

If you end up wanting to volunteer with a Worcester-based agency, you will sign up for your agency through Civitas. Civitas is the experiential learning hub for the College this year as we navigate community engagement in a virtual world. To sign up for your preferred community engagement opportunity in Worcester, visit the virtual volunteering page of the Civitas website: <https://sites.google.com/holycross.edu/civitas-now/take-action/virtual-volunteering>. Again, your placement with a Worcester-based agency is not guaranteed. You may end up hearing from a Civitas planning team member that your Worcester choice is full. If that ends up happening, reach out to Isabelle to discuss your options. **Sign up for your agency through Civitas by Friday, February 5th.**

If you end up wanting to create your own project or volunteer with an agency of your own choosing, please email Prof. Lipsitz and Isabelle (ijenkins@holycross.edu) with your idea. **Email us after class on Friday, February 5th.**

Worcester-Based Opportunities

Worcester-based opportunities can be found on the virtual volunteering page of the Civitas website: <https://sites.google.com/holycross.edu/civitas-now/take-action/virtual-volunteering>. Opportunities range from tutoring youth through the WPS and after-school programs, serving as a mentor to Worcester youth through after-school and leadership programs, working with adult English Language Learners, having weekly calls with residents in residential care facilities, and more. The Civitas website has brief descriptions of each opportunity, as well as links to the websites for each agency. Explore the Civitas website and the agency websites to think about which agency might be the best fit for you. To sign up for one of these options, submit the interest form on the Civitas website and then wait to hear from a Civitas planning team member or a student leader. They will connect you with the community partner to get you started. On-boarding with partners may include completing necessary volunteer paperwork (such as a CORI background check), attending a volunteer training, confirming your weekly schedule, and more. Sign up for a Worcester-based opportunity by Friday, February 5th. Students should expect to get the on-boarding process started shortly thereafter and begin their weekly volunteering in mid-February.

- **TimeSlips Opportunity:**

- One opportunity not on the Civitas website is working with Medway Manor and TimeSlips. Two students can participate in this project (and will work as a pair).
- Medway Manor is a skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility dedicated to meeting residents' short- and long-term needs through providing a variety of medical services and additional activities. TimeSlips is a global movement that seeks to bring meaning to late life through creative engagement. TimeSlips is working with HC volunteers and several residential care facilities this semester to create creative stories based on their "beautiful questions" model. This model takes a beautiful question, such as "What is the greatest sound in the world?" and uses it to engage young people and folks with memory challenges in meaningful conversations. These conversations will then be used to produce a creative element that will be shared with the residents. Examples include:
 - *Students print an image/images inspired by a session on card stock and mail it/them to their storytelling partner as a postcard...with a new beautiful question, of course.*
 - *Students could create a two- page booklet/card with a quote from a session, a personal note, and the student's photo.*
 - *If the residents know each other, the students could submit their favorite quote and their partner's name to create a "Who said What?" matching activity sheet, which could be sent to the residents to complete together during one of their activity times.*
- TimeSlips and Medway seek student volunteers to engage in the TimeSlips project. Pairs of students from College of the Holy Cross will visit with the residents on a weekly basis for a total of ~10 visits from mid-February to early May. Each week will feature a 30-minute phone call based on TimeSlips' "Beautiful Question" model, which uses open-ended questions to prompt the creation of original stories. This three-month intergenerational creative exchange will culminate in the creation and sharing of a creative element with the residents. Interested students should note that in addition to the 30-minute weekly phone calls, there will be additional responsibilities for the TimeSlips portion (a 3-hour training and individual meetings with Ian Bannon).

Ideas for Creating your Own Project

Community-based learning can and should happen anywhere and everywhere – in your own home communities, on the Holy Cross campus, and beyond. In this virtual world, we encourage you to think outside of the box and consider working on a creative project for CBL and/or coming up with your own project to do. Your project should take 1-2 hours of your time per week, engage in an issue related to your course content, and be of benefit to the community in some way. Prof. Lipsitz, the CBL Interns, and Isabelle are happy to meet with you to discuss your ideas and how you can put them into action for the CBL portion of your class. Below are a few current projects that could use CBL student assistance, as well as some ideas for you to start on your own. The Civitas website also is full of ideas about how to get engaged: <https://sites.google.com/holycross.edu/civitas-now/take-action>. Additionally, think about organizations that you already know about or have a connection with – you also have the opportunity to volunteer with an agency of your own choosing.

Creating asynchronous content for C.O.R.E.

C.O.R.E. (College Corps' Online Repository of Educational Content) is a new online resource that provides supplemental academic and extra-curricular materials for Worcester students and their caregivers. The online repository is a creation of College Corps, a coalition of representatives from Worcester-area colleges that has come together to respond to needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. The repository is filled with videos and additional content made by Worcester-area college students, faculty, and others to amplify and add to school-day learning. C.O.R.E. is looking for newly created content for its repository. This could be content about a subject area with which you are familiar (examples include, you reading a picture book that's suitable for children, doing science or math lessons for younger students, advice for college readiness, you discussing or doing your favorite activity, etc.). If you have any non-English language abilities, C.O.R.E. is also looking for newly created content about learning languages for younger, English-speaking students (for example, learning about how to say colors and numbers in Spanish or French, simple vocabulary, etc.). Video content should be short (no more than 7 minutes), easy to follow along with, and feature you in some way. Isabelle Jenkins will assist students in brainstorming content and drafting a video outline.

Joining a student group or participate in organizing on campus

Understanding and supporting the community starts right on the Holy Cross campus. Holy Cross is a microcosm of our larger society and, therefore, experiences many of the social justice challenges we see in the wider world today. Joining a student group or finding a way to organize around social justice on campus is a way to understand, participate in, and contribute to the Holy Cross community. Explore Holy Cross' student organizations through the Office of Student Involvement (<https://www.holycross.edu/campus-life/clubs-organizations>), the Chaplains' Office (<https://www.holycross.edu/faith-service/office-college-chaplains>), and myHC (https://myhc.holycross.edu/home_login).

Starting a social justice book/movie club with friends and/or family

Books and movies are a great way to deepen your understanding of individuals and communities different from yourself and groups in which you typically take part. Consider choosing a book or a group of films and gather people in your network to read and watch with you. There are numerous lists online with great ideas for books and films:

- Books, films, and podcasts about racism: <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2020/06/06/871023438/this-list-of-books-films-and-podcasts-about-racism-is-a-start-not-a-panacea>

- 15 Books, Movies, & Articles every feminist should read: <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/15-books-movies-and-articles-every-feminist-should/>
- 17 films about sustainability and climate change: <https://www.pbs.org/independentlens/blog/earth-day-watch-list-17-new-films-about-sustainability-climate-change/>
- The ultimate LGBTQIA+ and Pride book list: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/the-read-down/the-ultimate-book-list-for-pride-month>
- 8 nonfiction reads about social justice: <https://bookriot.com/nonfiction-books-about-social-justice/>

Letter writing campaigns

Consider doing a letter writing campaign to advocate for a particular social justice issue, to connect with those experiencing isolation, to offer gratitude to front line workers, and more. You can connect with the Chaplains' Office to join them in their efforts or work on your own.

- Join a campaign to register voters
- Bring joy and companionship to residents in care facilities by writing letters to folks in a facility of your choosing
- Thank frontline workers for their service during the pandemic and otherwise
- "Write for rights" with Amnesty international: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/get-involved/write-for-rights/>
- And more!

Advocacy work of your choosing

- Volunteer for a political campaign
- Advocate for a social justice issue that's important to you and create an action plan for yourself. Here's a great example of an action plan regarding educating oneself about advocating for justice for incarcerated people: "9 Solidarity Commitments to/with Incarcerated People for 2021," https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ByMHRNbsntdyziubfPjg7vDzxiBFEgroxzCUGKsxp9E/edit?fbclid=IwAR2qpBuk_pQ626dz4y6Ee-LZBD4ae7BYOACrL1bAITCtT4WS6roDTHgO2Y
- Not sure where to start? Check out the Civitas "additional opportunities" page for ideas: <https://sites.google.com/holycross.edu/civitas-now/take-action/additional-opportunities>