Steering Committee:
Rena Cotsones, Division of Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development, Co-Chair
Renique Kersh, Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning, Co-Chair
Joan Petros, College of Business
Stephanie Richter, Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center
Brian Sandberg, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Thank you to the many colleagues who reviewed proposals, assisted with conference logistics and supported our marketing efforts. We are grateful for the many contributions that made this conference possible.
Engaged Learning Exemplars

NIU faculty and staff have a long history of providing high-quality, hands-on learning opportunities for students, many of which result from partnerships with community and industry partners. The Engaged Learning, Teaching and Scholarship conference allows us the chance to celebrate the outstanding work of faculty and staff across campus who have committed to engaging students in the classroom and in the campus community; developing high impact co-curricular and curricular experiences; blazing the trail through scholarship that results in mutually beneficial relationships with community and industry partners; and leading efforts that result in local, regional, national and even global impacts. In essence, this conference paves the way for NIU to tell one story, while also acknowledging the many contributions that make our story compelling and a point of pride.

We are grateful that you have decided to join us and we look forward to continuing our collective efforts to promote excellence and engagement in teaching and learning, research and scholarship, creativity and artistry, and outreach and service.

Renique Kersh, Ph.D.
Associate Vice Provost for Engaged Learning
Co-Chair, Conference Steering Committee

What a joy to celebrate the many facets of engagement at NIU. During the Engaged Learning, Teaching and Scholarship Conference, and in this printed collection of NIU exemplars, we are confident you will be as impressed as we have been with the excellence of NIU faculty and staff who are finding innovative ways to engage students to enhance learning; collaborate with community organizations, government and businesses for mutual value; and generate meaningful impacts that go far beyond the boundaries of the campus. NIU’s leadership in engagement has been recognized in many quarters. NIU is classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a Community Engaged Institution. We were recognized by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) as an Innovation and Economic Prosperity institution. The list goes on. We would guess, however, that the best recognition the university could get of its excellence in engagement is in the excitement of students who discover a passion that will set a path for a meaningful career, the collaboration that sparks a new idea that will change the trajectory of an organization or community, and the inspirational moment a long-planned project comes to fruition and exceeds the expectations of all partners.

Congratulations and thank you to the NIU faculty, staff and students who are doing the work that distinguishes our university as a leader in engaged learning, teaching and scholarship.

Rena Cotsones, Ph.D.
Associate Vice President for Engagement, Outreach and Regional Development
Co-Chair, Conference Steering Committee
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The following individuals were also recognized as Engaged Learning Exemplars:
April Clark (CLAS), Concepcion Giesman (CLAS), Frances Jaeger (CLAS), Eric Johnson (CVPA),
Christine Staikidis (CVPA), Brendon Swedlow (CLAS), Reggie Thomas (CVPA), Artemus Ward (CLAS).
## Schedule at a Glance

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<tr>
<td>8 a.m.</td>
<td>Conference Registration and Continental Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30-9 a.m.</td>
<td>Welcome Remarks: Rena Cotsones and Renique Kersh with a special message from Lisa Freeman and Chris McCord: <em>Bringing NIU’s Mission to Life Through Engagement</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>9:15-9:45 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Best Practice Concurrent Session I</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community College Engagement: Creating Strategic Partnerships to Enhance Student Opportunities — <em>Illinois Room</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Partnerships for Engaged Teacher Professional Development in STEAM — <em>Lincoln Room</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Contemplating Contemplative Practices in Higher Education: An Example of Engaged Teaching, Learning and Scholarship — <em>Heritage Room</em></td>
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<td>Multilingualism and Multiculturalism for all: Language Lessons in Local After-school Programs — <em>University Suite</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>10-10:30 a.m.</td>
<td><strong>Best Practice Concurrent Session II</strong></td>
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<td>Universidad Para Padres: Developing “Parents of Change” Through Community Building — <em>Illinois Room</em></td>
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<td>Project SLIDE (Science Literacy in Diversity Education) — <em>Lincoln Room</em></td>
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<td>The Common Reading Experience: An Engaged Learning Practice — <em>Heritage Room</em></td>
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<td>Engaged Learning in South Africa: The TEEEP Partnership — <em>University Suite</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45-11:30 a.m.</td>
<td><em>Meaningful Engagement Using the Broader Impacts Framework</em></td>
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<td><strong>Plenary Speaker</strong>: Amy Pratt, Ph.D., Co-founder of the National Association for Broader Impacts and Associate Director of STEM Education Partnerships at Northwestern University</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:45 a.m.</td>
<td>Poster Session Begins</td>
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<td>Noon-12:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
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<td>1-1:30 p.m.</td>
<td><strong>Best Practice Concurrent Session III</strong></td>
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<td>NIU College of Law’s Clinical Program: Working with Community Partners to Make a Difference — <em>Illinois Room</em></td>
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<td>Kindergarten Readiness in DeKalb County: A Study by the DeKalb County Community Foundation and NIU — <em>Lincoln Room</em></td>
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<td>Cross-Disciplinary Student Team Development of Implementation Recommendations for a College Student/Adult Housing Partnership Program — <em>Heritage Room</em></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>The Open Doors Program: Reciprocal Engagement in High-Minority Public Schools — <em>University Suite</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:45 p.m.</td>
<td>Closing Discussion: The Future of Engaged Learning at NIU</td>
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Session Descriptions

8:30 – 9 a.m.
Bringing NIU’s Mission to Life Through Engagement
*Rena Cotsones, Division of Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development; Renique Kersh, Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning, Duke Ellington Ballroom*
Northern Illinois University is committed to promoting excellence and engagement in teaching and learning, research and scholarship, creativity and artistry, and outreach and service. Rena Cotsones and Renique Kersh will share stories of the impact this has had on our students, faculty, staff and community.

9:15 – 9:45 a.m.
Community College Engagement: Creating Strategic Partnerships to Enhance Student Opportunities
*Rebecca Shortridge, Brad Cripe and Angela Grimaldi, Department of Accountancy, Illinois Room*
This session is a panel discussion on ways in which the NIU Department of Accountancy has successfully partnered and engaged with community colleges to create opportunities for transfer students, who comprise over half of our student body.

Partnerships for Engaged Teacher Professional Development in STEAM
*Kristin Brynteson, Center for P-20 Engagement, Lincoln Room*
NIU STEAM collaborates with internal and external partners across the region to deliver high-quality educator professional development. The relationships built through these activities are mutually beneficial for all involved: from the districts, to the external organizations, to the NIU faculty and staff. Through the professional development programs, NIU STEAM has developed a network and community of educators. This session will provide an overview of the NIU Professional Development services, and highlight key aspects and outcomes of several of the successful partnerships.

Contemplating Contemplative Practices in Higher Education: An Example of Engaged Teaching, Learning and Scholarship
*Leslie Sassone and Shannon Dudzienski, Derek Duleba, Marian Galluzzo, Esther Langer and Brisa Martinez, Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations, Heritage Room*
During this session, a panel of NIU students will reflect on their fall 2017 Upper-Division Honors Seminar in Foundations of Education where they experienced the use of contemplative practices in higher education. Students will share what they learned through this participatory action research approach. The seminar included students with major areas of study in Anthropology, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Community Leadership and Civic Engagement, Computer Science, Engineering, English, Music Performance, Philosophy, Psychology and Sociology.

Multilingualism and Multiculturalism for All: Language Lessons in Local After-school Programs
*Karen Lichtman, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, University Suite*
For the past five years, NIU students training to become foreign language teachers have taught local elementary school children culturally based thematic units in Spanish, French and German. This engaged teaching and learning program was developed to solve three problems: (1) Foreign language teachers are licensed to teach K-12, but many have no experience teaching younger children; (2) Many college students experienced grammar-based foreign language teaching when they were in school, but today are expected to teach more cultural content and (3) Children in DeKalb and Sycamore currently have no access to foreign language lessons before middle school. NIU students in the elementary language teaching methods class have taught at Founders, Southeast and Brooks elementary schools. By teaching about topics ranging from the holiday of Carnaval to Little Red Riding Hood, the teacher candidates get their first classroom teaching experience and give children their first exposure to world languages and other cultures. This session will provide details about this program and the impact on students through these experiences.
10 – 10:30 a.m.

Undiversidad Para Padres: Developing “Parents of Change” Through Community Building

Susana DasNeves, Parent University, Center for P-20 Engagement, Illinois Room

Participants in this session will learn how the Northern Illinois Regional P-20 Network “Parent University” program is making an impact on parents’ self-development, parent/child relationships and school involvement through collaborative partnerships between school districts, community and Northern Illinois University. Lessons learned and parents’ experiences will be shared.

Project SLIDE (Science Literacy in Diversity Education)

Gary Swick, Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations; Diane Zalesky, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, Lincoln Room

This session will highlight an Educate Local Project that supported a partnership between NIU, CUSD 300 and a local nonprofit organization-Friends of the Fox River. Pre-service teachers developed science literacy lessons for fifth grade students. These lessons were implemented in the Golfview Elementary School classrooms and in the field at Schweitzer Woods Forest Preserve. These innovative science project-based learning experiences benefited the NIU students, the Golfview students and their teachers, and helped build the partnership in watershed education between Friends of the Fox River’s Schweitzer Environmental Center and CUSD 300.

The Common Reading Experience: An Engaged Learning Practice

Kelly Smith and Shelley Mass, First- and Second-Year Experience; Michael Day and Ellen Franklin, First-Year Composition, Heritage Room

This presentation will reveal assessment data on student learning, share developed curriculum surrounding the 2017-2019 Common Reading Experience (CRE) book selection and let participants know how they can become more involved with the CRE. First- and Second-Year Experience has collaborated with multiple departments and offices across campus, including the English Department, to implement the Common Reading Experience (CRE) book selection, producing curriculum for multiple first-year course sections and supporting a variety of on- and off-campus programming to encourage NIU students to engage in deeper learning during their first year using a common intellectual experience.

Engaged Learning in South Africa: The TEEEP Partnership

Joanne Dempsey, Econ Illinois; Tracy Rogers-Tryba, Center for P-20 Engagement, University Suite

This session will provide an overview of the Economics and Entrepreneurship Education Program (TEEEP) in South Africa. TEEEP is an after-school program for grades five through 7 that provides children with the knowledge and skills needed to open doors of opportunity in the working world. The curriculum is sequential (three units), and integrates hands-on, engaged learning activities within a classroom economy in which children “earn” and learn about spending and saving. The program was developed by Northern Illinois University and is being delivered through a partnership with the South African YMCA in cooperation with the University of Johannesburg. The program could be used in after-school settings here in the U.S. or in other international settings.

10:45 – 11:30 a.m.

Meaningful Engagement Using the Broader Impacts Framework

Plenary Speaker: Amy Pratt, Northwestern University, Duke Ellington Ballroom

As a founding member of the National Association of Broader Impacts (NABI), Dr. Pratt will describe the genesis of the BI movement and how Northwestern University uses its principles to establish meaningful partnerships for engaged learning, teaching and scholarship.
Session Descriptions

11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

Poster Session

Enjoy the following posters in the Duke Ellington Ballroom over lunch.

Educate U.S.

*Portia Downey and students, College of Education*

This poster will provide information about the outcomes and impacts of Educate U.S., which is a component of the College of Education's hands-on "Educate and Engage" program. This opportunity enables select teacher licensure candidates to work side-by-side with cooperating teachers, preparing lessons and engaging in co-teaching strategies in the Houston Independent School District. NIU teacher candidates further enrich their experience by staying with host families, exploring the community and “living the life of a teacher.”

Team-based Learning in Nursing: Preparing Students to Work Collaboratively

*Kari Hickey and Amy Johnson, School of Nursing*

This poster will provide participants with information on the use of team-based learning practices with nursing students. Active learning is an essential component of health care education, and team-based learning (TBL) is a unique teaching pedagogy that emphasizes teamwork, communication skills and problem-solving. Through the Readiness Assurance Process, students’ level of understanding is gauged and misunderstandings are clarified. Through classroom activities designed using the 4S framework, students reveal their level of understanding and create opportunities for specific and timely feedback. Finally, students are held accountable to high levels of effort and team contribution.

Engaged Learning Lessons from Tanzania Study Abroad

*Kurt Thurmaier, Department of Public Administration*

This poster will provide lessons learned from the Tanzania study abroad program from 2009 to 2016. Program challenges include forming partnerships with Tanzanian NGOs, creating appropriate activities, managing field logistics for engaged learning projects and developing appropriate assessments for student learning.

Engaging Scholars, Learners and Practitioners through Rigorous and Relevant Leadership Projects

*Mahesh Subramony, Department of Management*

This poster will highlight the work of the Center for Human Capital and Leadership. Communities are composed of people and organizations with heterogeneous, yet overlapping needs and values. Effective partnerships between higher education institutions and organizations (private and nonprofit) can result in positive experiences and outcomes for three stakeholders - students, organizations and faculty. A case study describing the creation and evolution of a community of College of Business students, faculty and practitioners initiated by the Center for Human Capital and Leadership will be presented.

Creating Career Pathways for Local Communities

*Amy Jo Clemens and Chris Kraner, Center for P-20 Engagement*

Network Leadership Communities were looking for ways to help students and their advisors visualize the quickest way to careers in their priority sectors. The Center for P-20 Engagement developed NIU career pathways documents to simplify the sometimes complex routes to a certificate or degree. This poster will highlight insights from focus groups with students, faculty and staff. These documents allow students to begin pursuing various high-demand careers with local economic impact while still in high school.
Social Venture Consulting: Engaging Students and the Community

Christine Mooney, Department of Management

This poster will highlight a course that entails partnering student teams with social enterprises to help the clients identify business problems, develop viable solutions and provide implementation strategies. Students learn consulting methodologies, which focus on building sound relationships, exercising a strength-based approach, embracing a “possibility and capacity” methodology for problem-solving, and managing the process for implementation. This course helps students examine the strategic aspects of social enterprises with a focus on developing and implementing those strategies. At the same time, this course provides consulting services, including research and expertise, to social ventures at an affordable price - their time.

STEM Read: Explore the Science Behind the Fiction!

Gillian King-Cargile, Center for P-20 Engagement

STEM Read uses live and online programs to inspire readers to learn more about the science, technology, engineering and math concepts in popular fiction. Readers enjoy the books on their own or with school or library groups and then meet at NIU or connect with us online to explore the science behind the fiction through hands-on activities, presentations by NIU faculty and staff, author visits, interactive web games, collaborative writing projects and other STEAM activities. In the past year, our program involved nearly 7,000 people at live events and over 100,000 more online. This poster will introduce the NIU community to our program and offer ways for faculty, staff and students to get involved.

Innovative Partnerships Providing Ongoing Opportunities for Research and Scholarship - The Illinois Report Card and Postsecondary Report Card


(Division of Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development)

In 2002, the Illinois Report Card was established as a ground-breaking partnership between NIU and the Illinois State Board of Education, providing a broad public audience with an approachable and understandable synopsis of K-12 school performance across the state of Illinois, and providing access to data for over a decade of research and scholarship. In 2018 NIU will again lead the way by partnering with the Illinois Board of Higher Education and the Illinois Community College Board to launch the Illinois Postsecondary Report Card. This poster will explore the ongoing opportunities that these innovative state partnerships provide for NIU’s research community.

STEM Outreach and its Students Have Grown Together for Eight Years, Engaging Children and Adults of All Ages with Inspirational and Awe-inspiring Programs

Samuel Watt, STEM Outreach

NIU STEM Outreach has utilized the burgeoning skills of students through employment and volunteer opportunities. This poster will include selected students’ biographies depicting how they have made efforts to engage with the community, how NIU STEM Outreach has benefited from their work and how the students themselves have grown through the program’s positive influence. These stories are shared through the lens of the students with the context of the different programs they’ve participated in described by NIU STEM Educators.

Making University, Community and Global Partnerships Possible: Lessons Learned by a NIU Student Organization about Engagement

Chris Kraner, Lexi Marcotte and Kaitlyn Amenda, Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education; Elizabeth Wilkins, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

This poster focuses on lessons learned by an NIU student organization about making university, community and global partnerships possible. Three key areas will be shared as to how that outreach resulted in service opportunities for both undergraduates and graduate students: (1) Leadership experience gained; (2) Selection and focus on complex problems; and (3) Networking with college administrators, faculty and staff to enhance engagement. The positive impact on those involved will be described, along with how the organization was reenergized and restructured.
Session Descriptions

11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. (continued)

Co-curricular Service-learning Programs Fostering a Community for First-generation and Low-income Students

Michaela Holtz, Nelisha Gray and Edgar Lopez Chacon, Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning

Studies have shown that first-generation and low-income students often struggle with the transition to college and with issues related to family and work demands and finances. This poster will provide information about how the Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning (OSEEL) collaborates with a number of campus and community partners to offer two paid, co-curricular service-learning programs, Huskie Service Scholars (HSS) and NIU Service Leaders (NIUSL). The programs provide students with the opportunity to engage in service-learning on campus or in the community; grow their academic, social, civic and professional skills; and create a support network of peers and staff while also offering financial support.

Designing and Teaching an Effective Service-learning Course: Lessons Learned

Mylan Engel Jr., Department of Philosophy

This poster will provide information about the development and implementation of a new service-learning course: “The Philosophy of Food.” The poster will highlight how service-learning became a primary interest, the kinds of service-learning activities incorporated into a philosophy of food course and the community partnerships that were essential to its success. The poster will also include the role that reflection papers plan in successful service-learning courses and tips on course design.

Harnessing Technology for Maximum Student Engagement

Alicia Schatteman, Department of Public Administration and Center for Nonprofit and NGO Studies

Faculty members are challenged by student use of mobile devices in the classroom which can also be distracting for other students. No one wants to look out at a sea of students, heads down, their eyes focused on something other than course content. This poster will explore the ways faculty can engage students in course content using technology in the classroom and also in assignments. Ideas from an undergraduate course where technology is embraced will be profiled.

Assessment of the Holistic Needs of Clients in the Community with Mental Health Issues: Engagement of Nursing Students via an Innovative Simulation Exercise

Carol Wahlstrom, Kathleen Musker, Jeanette Rossetti and Joseph Griffey, School of Nursing

This poster will highlight an innovative educational simulation exercise which engages the undergraduate nursing student in the assessment process of their client’s community mental health needs. The simulation allows the student to utilize therapeutic communication techniques, conduct holistic assessments and document the nursing process of their clients in a safe environment. The protocol for implementing scenarios that engage the learner will be presented and outcomes of student learning highlighted.

NIU Forensics, the Embodiment of Engaged Learning

Judy Santacaterina, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; Lauren Hoppenrath, School of Health Studies; Paige Russell, Department of Communication

This poster will highlight the outcomes for students who participate in forensics, including the honing of their public speaking skills. Forensics students engage in quality research, community involvement, and policy making as well as artistry and performance. NIU Forensics is one of the oldest co-curricular activities on the campus. Our students and alumni represent 50 different majors from all seven colleges.
Engagement Hacked

Tracy Rogers-Tryba, Center for P-20 Engagement

This poster will provide an overview of NIU's Huskie Hack, the nation's only mixed educational Hackathon hosting middle school to collegiate students over a 24-plus hour continuous period. These competitions and ideations engage learners from all interest and experience levels in open critical thinking challenges involving informal engaged learning. Walk away with an understanding of how informal and interdisciplinary engaged learning opportunities can promote more inquiry, development of critical thinking skills and self-efficacy in students beginning as early as fourth grade. Understand that formal learning can take place within an informal event through peer-to-peer mentoring, community mentoring, skill development workshops and assigned tasks throughout the event.

Undeclared Majors: How Project-based Learning Can Help Students Select a Career Pathway

Luanne Mayorga, Econ Illinois

Selecting a major can be challenging. Estimates indicate that roughly half of America's undergraduate students struggle with the process of identifying and/or declaring a major. This poster highlights stories from two NIU students and how project-based learning involving multidisciplinary teams and realistic workplace scenarios helped them find their way. Learn how these students were able to explore various career pathways and confidently declare their majors.

Engaged Learning through Immersion: Deutschland heute - Facets of Contemporary Germany

Friedemann Stuebing, Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures

This poster will highlight a study abroad program coordinated by the Northern Illinois University Study Abroad Office, in cooperation with the Northern Illinois University College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. The International Academy Internationales Haus Sonnenberg, St. Andreasberg, Germany, is the cooperating institution overseas. Students in the program are introduced to a variety of topics on contemporary Germany. Instruction and local excursions provide first-hand experience, in-depth understanding and language immersion.

Writing About Migration: English 103 Research Proposal

Jeanne Jakubowski and students, Department of English

This poster will highlight the use of migration discovery for students in the CHANCE program. In the spring of 2018, students are asked to read the interview-based text, The Warmth of Other Suns: "The Epic Story of America's Great Migration," by Isabel Wilkerson. Students conduct their own research by interviewing a senior family member or other individual in the community who has experienced migration, and include online and other research (for example, music of the time period) to become more engaged in discovering the migration story of their interview subject.

Money Smart Partnerships

Judith Dymond, NIU STEAM; Beth Metzler, Econ Illinois; Josh Huseman, First National Bank; Tammy Batsman, Department of Economics

This poster will highlight the opportunities provided through the NIU Center for Economic Education and its partners, Econ Illinois and First National Bank. This partnership connects the university to the community by engaging adults through STEM Café talks in restaurants, activities at the library for kids, student competitions, and visiting classrooms to engage young people in financial literacy, economic way of thinking, and career spotlights for upper grade students.

1 – 1:30 p.m.

NIU College of Law’s Clinical Program: Working with Community Partners to Make a Difference

Colleen Boraca, College of Law Health Advocacy Clinic; Anita Maddali, College of Law; Stella Fitzgerald, Aunt Martha’s Health and Outreach Center; Jennifer Beebe, College of Law Health Advocacy Clinic, Illinois Room

This session focuses on the role of community partnerships in developing and expanding clinical opportunities and engaged learning for law students. To begin the session, NIU’s clinical director will discuss the evolution of their four legal clinics serving three separate Illinois communities.
Session Descriptions

1 - 1:30 p.m. (continued)

Kindergarten Readiness in DeKalb County: A study by the DeKalb County Community Foundation and NIU
Amy Jo Clemens, Center for P-20 Engagement; Shannon Sohl, Center for Governmental Studies; Anita Zurbrugg, DeKalb County Community Foundation, Lincoln Room
The span from birth to age five is a unique time in a child's life and can positively or negatively impact the ability to be ready for kindergarten and to succeed in life. The DeKalb County Community Foundation commissioned a study from the NIU Center for P-20 Engagement and the Center for Governmental Studies that focuses on children in DeKalb County birth to five years of age and explores the factors that are contributing to or hindering their successful transition into kindergarten. This presentation will highlight the use of a collective impact process and information from the report, which has resulted in the Foundation's engagement with early care and education teachers, kindergarten teachers and community stakeholders in working together to implement approaches for strengthening the transition to kindergarten for DeKalb County's children and their families.

Cross-disciplinary Student Team Development of Implementation Recommendations for a College Student/Older Adult Housing Partnership Program - Challenges, Opportunities and Strategies for a Successful Outcome
Jamie Mayer, School of Allied Health and Communicative Disorders; Shail Godambe, Department of Operations Management and Information Systems; Chase Nelson, Student; Joan Petros, College of Business Experiential Learning Center, Heritage Room
The Experiential Learning Center (ELC), housed in the College of Business, connects faculty-guided teams of undergraduate and graduate students with real organizations to tackle a real issue over the course of a 16-week collaboration. Hardworking, intelligent and creative students apply lessons from their coursework and utilize an internally developed project management methodology to work through the real-world issue. The students' fresh insights lead to impactful solutions delivered to the external organization in a formal written report and presentation. In this session, we will share how students from business and health and human sciences examined the possibility of providing low-cost housing for college students while meeting companion needs of older adults through a housing partnership program, and turned their fresh insights into impactful solutions for AMITA Health.

The Open Doors Program: Reciprocal Engagement in High-minority Public Schools
Natalie Young, Department of Special and Early Education; Veronica Riva, NIU Alumna, University Suite
This presentation will provide information on the outcomes of the Open Doors Project. The Open Doors Project is sponsored by the Partnership Office in the College of Education as part of the Educate Local initiative. The Open Doors Project is a hands-on field experience for pre-service teachers; that provides them with an opportunity to serve and connect with primary grade-level students of color through the creation of personal vision boards. The partnering school community is located in an urban area on the outskirts of Chicago and primarily consists of low socioeconomic African-American and Latino families.

1:45 – 2:30 p.m.

The Future of Engaged Learning at NIU
Rena Cotsones, Division of Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development; Renique Kersh, Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning, Duke Ellington Ballroom
As a wrap-up to the conference, participants will engage in brief discussions about future engagement opportunities at NIU, including potential partnerships.
Gregory Beyer
Professor and Head of Percussion Studies

Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
The opportunity to engage young, intelligent, talented students in ongoing research, scholarship and creativity is incredibly powerful. It is mutually beneficial and breathes life into precious and rare work in such a way that ensures a healthy and long future for projects. In a very real way, we are shepherds of our ideas, and we dance with those ideas. The ideas have chosen us, just as much as we have chosen them, and by sharing those ideas with young scholars, we ensure that the ideas cultivate a community.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
One of the most transformative experiences I’ve had involved working with a former student, Alexis Lamb. The decision to work with Alexis over the course of five semesters led to an incredible professional journey which continues today. We’ve created a nonprofit organization called Arcomusical NFP. Its mission is to bring musical bows into American musical culture through education, research, composition, publication and performance. The organization is transforming the way we see ourselves as professionals and as productive members of community.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
Arcomusical is making great impacts in the region and in musical circles throughout the country. We’ve engaged in multi-day residencies at universities in Washington, Kansas, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio, New Jersey, Massachusetts and New York. We have released an album of our original compositions, which has received accolades and media attention on NPR’s Weekend Edition Sunday. At the same time, we have become involved in local community building through education and performance. We are members of the DeKalb Chamber of Commerce and the DeKalb Community Nonprofit Partnership, and we performed locally at the DeKalb Public Library, with special new arrangements for the holidays. We play cutting-edge chamber music, but also see great value in performing known music for everyone in the community to enjoy. We have also engaged in K-12 educational residencies in the Meridian 223 school district in Stillman Valley, Illinois, through generous support from the DeKalb County Community Foundation.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
Engaged learning is important because students become invested if they are engaged in their learning. This investment inspires them to work harder and become passionate participants in their learning.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
The NIU Health Advocacy Clinic, the law school-based legal clinic I direct, is located in Aurora at Hessed House, the second largest homeless shelter in Illinois. Law students work on-site with homeless clients, and this immersion allows them to appreciate how vital their work is to helping clients transition out of homelessness. Students have multiple written reflections during the semester. These reflections demonstrate the many lessons they are learning, which will assist them in becoming more thoughtful, compassionate attorneys.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
Because of the work of the NIU Health Advocacy Clinic, clients have access to justice. Without our students, many clients would be unrepresented and unsuccessful at hearings. By helping clients secure public benefits, our students use their legal skills to help these individuals transition out of homelessness. Students who participate in the NIU Health Advocacy Clinic learn practical skills that will make them effective attorneys but also learn, first-hand, the role attorneys play in helping those impacted by poverty.
Brad Cripe
Accountancy

Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.

Engaged student learning can be the pedagogical methodology of all teachers and learners. From the most basic active learning exercise to impacting the social contract we have with one another, engaged student learning seeks to extend the physical and mental boundaries of our university to improve the lives and well-being of society. It impacts society because the distance between the learner and society is short. Placing the learner in a condition where they are actively helping others, while learning the material at hand, helps both society and the learner reap the benefits of learning faster. Finally, it promotes a greater partnership between the learning community and society. As information is exchanged between them, the ability of the learning community to adapt to the needs of society increases – and society’s ability to harvest the benefits of the learning community grows as well. All benefit, at very little cost.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.

The Department of Accountancy has partnered with Goodwill Industries to provide the GoodTAXES VITA center, where students and community members can sign up to receive free tax return preparation assistance. This program, designed to benefit low-income families, partners our superior accounting students with families in the area in need of accurate and reliable tax return preparation services. Our accounting students have prepared thousands of tax returns over the last 10 years and have returned millions of federal aid dollars to the DeKalb community. All of this community benefit has occurred while also strengthening the technical knowledge of our students, so that they are better prepared accountants for the business world. Real clients – real issues – and real people learning and growing while helping the community.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.

I think the great thing about this is that this is not my work. The chemist doesn’t credit the test tube for the discovery – it’s the chemicals and thought that has gone into the work that is deserving of praise and reward. Here, it is the students who have worked so hard to learn the material; it is Goodwill Industries that has provided so much infrastructure and resources to make the program viable; and it is the clients who come with their paperwork and their expectation that they will receive excellent service every time. That’s the magic of this engaged learning process. That’s where the real reward can be seen in the community. The smiles, thanks and appreciation that clients have for my students demonstrates to them the real impact that this work can have on the community. It shows that business education can help elevate and improve the social contract. And it shows members of the community that we care about them very much.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.

Engaged learning is important because it helps students to understand the practical importance of philosophy. It also helps students gain a deeper understanding of the concepts and ideas being discussed in class.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.

I have regularly incorporated experiential learning activities in my classes and have recently begun including service-learning activities as well.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.

In my recent service-learning course on the philosophy of food, my students gained a much deeper appreciation of the impact of food scarcity both at home and abroad, and also learned concrete steps that they can take to help reduce food scarcity. They volunteer at Feed My Starving Children, and at the NIU greenhouse and NIU Communiversity Gardens, they plant food that is subsequently provided to the NIU food pantry.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
Engaged learning stimulates interest, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
I incorporate team-based activities into every class (at both the undergraduate and graduate level). I then follow each activity with a “debrief” discussion linking the activity back to course material. I then follow up with an assignment that each student does independently after having practiced it with their teams.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
I believe incorporating engaged learning has helped my students see real-life applications and the value of the course content. Because I am preparing future health care professionals, my hope is that this will lead to the formation of better care for those in our communities in the future. In a recent example, my graduate students first worked within their teams to practice critically evaluating research on a variety of language interventions. Then, each student had to find, evaluate and synthesize literature to answer a new health care-based question independently. Finally, each student presented their clinically driven research findings at a small research conference that I hosted at NIU that offered continuing education units for regional practicing clinicians.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important. Engaged learning promotes higher-order thinking for students. Rather than having a teacher be the “fount of all knowledge,” faculty who engage learners design problem-based experiences that allow their students to apply new knowledge and skills, analyze situations, generate solutions and evaluate the success of their efforts. These skills are critical to career and life success.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work. Candidates in the first clinical experience in the special education licensure program collect assessment data, analyze data and then design lessons. The candidates then video-record themselves teaching the lessons to focus learners, and analyze both their teaching effectiveness and the student’s progress. I meet with candidates to complete “reflective conversations” in which they show me sections of video that they felt were effective, and segments in which they identified something they need to improve. These conversations allow candidates to take the lead in defining their own strengths and needs with respect to their professional teaching practices. In addition, I provide extensive written feedback in the form of “considerations,” or suggestions for them to consider in adjusting their assignments and instruction.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc. Teaching on-site in Kaneland has allowed us to develop closer relationships with excellent teachers who provide mentoring for our candidates. The districts in which we placed candidates engaged with NIU by inviting faculty to provide professional development workshops for their in-service teachers. The in-service teachers also provided mini-lessons for the teacher candidates during my class, making the relationship with the district reciprocal.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.

Maya Angelou once stated that we are not necessarily born with courage, but we are born with the potential to have courage. In that spirit, I believe service learning (as engaged learning) is important in helping young adults discover and utilize their courage, as well as their confidence and capability. Our students will need these qualities to meet the challenges and demands of life. I believe it is important for them to see and interact with the world outside of their own cultural and social environments to develop into engaged citizens who will use their knowledge and skills for problem-solving, change and social justice.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.

A question I ask my students is, “How do you intend to use your voice?” As a means of answering that question, students engage in volunteer/community service for nonprofit organizations and activities as part of the course requirements. Through these assignments and activities, my mission is to help students: 1) Develop a deeper sense of their own self-identity; 2) Acquire a richer and more humane understanding of others, including a recognition of how systems of privilege and oppression influence their lives and the lives of others; 3) Consider how their educational and career goals can include sustained engagement in community service/volunteer work; 4) Articulate ways in which they can help improve the quality of life in this world and work for social justice; and 5) Participate in productive and helpful activities that build friendships, networks, and present and future connections. Every semester, I witness the powerful transformation of students who are incredibly fearful about giving speeches and interacting and volunteering with others, to students who speak to their classmates and engage in volunteer activities with courage, confidence and capability.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.

Because my course requires students to engage in volunteer work for nonprofit university and community organizations and activities, I volunteer and work alongside my students whenever possible. I have an extensive background in arts advocacy, both as a professional and volunteer, and I share my stories and insights with my students.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
Engaged learning helps students see the real-world applications of what they are studying.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
I have my teacher-licensure students co-plan and co-teach culturally based thematic units to local elementary school children.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
We have been teaching languages in local schools for five years. Last year, 80 young people (who have no other access to foreign language classes) got to learn Spanish and French!
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
Engaged learning is a fantastic way to get students to integrate their own experiences with course material. This significantly enhances their understanding of course topics by allowing them to make personal, concrete connections to broader concepts. Moreover, in most cases, the service aspect of the experience can boost students' self-efficacy and allow them to see how they can fit into the bigger picture as part of a larger community outside of the classroom.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
While all of my projects are still works in progress, I think one of the most important components of engaged learning is the ability for students to take what is done in the community context and critically reflect upon what they are doing, as well as why and how it relates to other aspects of their academic career. Thus, the students and I try to meet to debrief on a regular basis. Students are collecting qualitative and in some cases quantitative data on project outcomes, which also helps them to not only learn about the research process but also to experience directly the impact they are having on people's lives.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
I currently have several concurrent engaged learning projects going. The first is the Music and Memory program at Pine Acres Nursing facility in DeKalb. Initially funded by a tri-county grant, the program involves using personalized music with residents with dementia to augment quality of life, promote emotional/remote memory and decrease agitation/pain. The program is run by NIU undergraduate students in conjunction with the Pine Acres activities director and nursing staff. We are in the process of collecting data to examine the effect(s) of music on residents' communication, comfort and medication needs. The second program in progress is the Bridges Choir, designed for individuals with acquired language, speech or cognitive challenges. The choir is run out of Oak Crest Retirement Center in DeKalb, but choir members can be from anywhere in the surrounding community. The choir was initiated by a speech-language pathology graduate student under my supervision following a CISLL PoP grant that allowed the student to travel to California to research directly other choirs with a similar purpose. We named the choir “Bridges” because music can act as a bridge between language, cognition and verbal expression. The choir is continuing this semester with several graduate and undergraduate student volunteers. We have collected qualitative data on participants’ thoughts and reactions from last semester, and are planning to expand the data collection process this spring. Finally, I co-run a monthly support group for stroke survivors out of the NIU Speech-Language-Hearing clinic. Graduate and undergraduate student volunteers help with planning activities, designing informational handouts and working one-on-one with group members as needed during meetings to facilitate communication and participation. It is my hope that this work has impacted both the community and NIU students, first by showcasing our amazing student talents and allowing the community to see new ways in which students can interact with community members. I believe this work also has impacted students by allowing them to see directly how they can influence the quality of life for individuals with acquired language or cognitive disorders. I think students have been surprised by how much they have been able to learn from those they are helping.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
Engaged learning allows students to apply the knowledge that they are learning from the classroom and engages the community in the learning process.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
I facilitate student consulting projects with social ventures, provide opportunities for students to develop business plans and pitch their ideas to potential investors, and guide them as they create and launch their business models.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
Students learn to navigate the challenges and uncertainty of real-world experiences. They are exposed to failure in a low-risk environment where they can learn and grow from those experiences. In addition, organizations benefit from the experience, expertise and energy that students exhibit and the region gains from having its constituents better prepared from this engaged learning experience.
James “Mitch” Pickerill
Political Science

Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
Engaged learning allows students to put theory into practice and see how what they’ve learned in the classroom is applicable in the real world.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
I coach the NIU undergraduate mock trial in which students play the roles of attorneys in rigorous academic competitions judged by practitioners. I also routinely develop and employ simulations in several of my undergraduate classes.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
Last academic year I traveled a total of nine weekends with students for tournaments and competitions, and at least five other days for scrimmages. Graduates from the mock trial program have gone on to be highly successful in the legal profession and other careers. In the fall of 2017, we hosted a large mock trial tournament with teams coming from as far away as Texas and Arizona, and we brought in more than 70 volunteers (more than 50 of whom are NIU alumni) to judge the competition.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important. Learning has to happen in and out of the classroom to make an impact on the lives of students. And even academic work has to take place beyond the class for students to understand and achieve their full potential.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work. Through the initiative I co-founded and now run alone, the Tocqueville Forum, students have been provided with funding to do major independent research, the ability to attend a special seminar and listen to speakers from top universities, and travel opportunities for research and networking to publish research.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc. Through the Tocqueville Forum, students develop their interest in American politics and history and become better qualified to achieve high academic goals. Two of our participants have been Lincoln Laureates.
Lan Hui Ryder
Foreign Languages

Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important. Engaged learning promotes meaningful learning experiences and motivates students to actively participate in learning.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work. In the classroom, I incorporate mobile-based virtual reality (VR) tools in my teaching.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc. My practice and analysis of adopting VR tools in class teaching invigorates students by utilizing the increasingly ubiquitous mobile-based VR technology for meaningful language learning.
Scot Schraufnagel
Political Science

Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
Engaged learning provides students with experiences that make them better prepared for success.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
I teach a professional development seminar that brings in guest speakers from the community. I run a mentorship program that involves community leaders as mentors for NIU students and I am advisor to the Model Illinois Government student group that engages students with state government officials.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important. Engaged learning is the best way for students to get the most out of the learning environment. Being engaged means being interested and motivated to learn. The challenge for educators is: How to keep students interested and motivated?

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
I use innovation to keep students interested, motivated and engaged in the classroom and I also focus on understanding the students’ perspective about learning. Only by understanding our students’ needs can we begin to understand how we should act and innovate to best serve their learning.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
The best compliment that I have received from students is when they say that my teaching style and strategy make them want to be in class. Other students, who have not had the opportunity to be in my class, also say they wish they were in my class. A student’s desire to be part of the learning process, not only when in class but beyond, is a clear indication of engagement. I am proud to say that I have developed a reputation as an exemplar of teaching in the School of Nursing. My colleagues are already soliciting my input on best practices for improving their teaching. This has inspired me to expand my knowledge and share the teaching strategies I employ in my classroom to benefit other classrooms and the other students.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
Engaged learning provides students with the opportunity to explore areas of their discipline outside the classroom space and encourages students to question and discover new concepts, and to test new skills.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
Each semester, I take my entire class to the Mexican bakery located adjacent to campus. Students interact with the owner and learn about the variety of baked goods he offers. Often the owner will discuss the significance of certain baked goods, especially as they relate to particular events or holidays. Also, I received a grant to travel to Costa Rica where I had the opportunity to visit several nonprofit organizations offering internship opportunities to students. I was able to identify several opportunities for students to travel abroad, practice their second language skills and participate in community efforts to improve their environment.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
Students see the value in reaching out to our local community members and collaborating with them. They discover their own potential to have an impact on our society, and they develop a “can-do” attitude, which in turn leads to greater confidence as well as a nice boost in leadership skills.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
Engaged learning allows me to link my research to teaching in a very tangible way, while also actively engaging students and creating a more interesting classroom experience.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
I work with area nonprofit organizations that have very limited capacity, and I bring them together with students who want real-world experience.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
I believe that nonprofit organizations have benefited from the work my students have done with them, to improve their own capacity and get a different perspective than what they might have on their staff and boards. I also think students have benefited by testing ideas that we talk about in class, allowing them to apply textbook knowledge to real experiences.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
I believe, quite simply, that students learn by becoming active participants in their field of study. In the foreign language classroom, this means adopting a second language and making it one’s own, rather than considering it an object of study. Likewise, in my classes that focus on culture, students are encouraged to engage directly in the cultural debates and practices rather than just observe them in an abstract manner. I believe that this empowers them as learners.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
I co-directed a study abroad program that embodies engaged learning at every level. Students are encouraged to be fully immersed in the culture and language. They live with a French-speaking host-family, and activities and excursions are carried out on-site and in the target language. The students are at all times called on to put their cultural and linguistic knowledge to use in a variety of situations.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
My teaching has fostered cross-cultural and cross-linguist competence in my students. In addition to learning to become responsible and knowledgeable world citizens, many have embarked on careers that strive to help others overcome the obstacles imposed by an increasingly globalized world. These include immigration law, interpretation and translation, and second-language teaching among others.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.

Engaged learning allows students to understand that all the elements that contribute to knowledge are interrelated. It also helps them understand the context from which knowledge comes, and the context created by knowledge itself.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.

The majority of the engaged learning I practice takes place in the study abroad program in Toledo, Spain. I try to show students the relationship between action and effect (or theory and practice), and how this relationship creates more knowledge.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.

I believe that my work has had an impact on my students precisely because I try to make them aware of the relationships that surround the knowledge they already have, and the one they should obtain or create.

Given the overwhelming positive feedback from the program, I would say that students enjoy and benefit in so many expected and unexpected ways. In fact, one student decided to teach English in Chile so that she could be closer to her host family. For me, that type of life-changing experience is what proves the value of a study abroad program that truly pushes students out of their comfort zone and into a higher degree of understanding about the world and themselves.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.

As a language teacher, I am convinced that nothing can enrich a student’s life and improve a student’s language learning process more than immersion. Aside from learning the language better and faster, immersion broadens a student’s horizon in many ways through exposure to real-life experience and the practical application of learned concepts. A study abroad program becomes a “window to the world” for the participants by introducing them to international culture, history and politics.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.

One example of creative learning is the “Restaurant Project.” Students take pictures of menus from various restaurants in a city. They use those for ideas to “create” their own restaurant and then present the concept and menu of this restaurant to their fellow students. The “German Currywurst Museum” is another opportunity for hands-on, interactive learning. Students can role-play being a customer and/or vendor at a typical fast food stand, race against others in a game to make different currywurst dishes and complete a questionnaire proving their new knowledge to earn their lunch...a currywurst, of course!

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.

As a result, some students ended up working for a German company, decided to pursue a career as translator or decided to study in a German-speaking country.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.

Engaged learning allows students to fully participate in their education process. When students solve real-life problems with the assistance of their faculty, they develop a variety of skills that help them transition into the professional world.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.

I facilitate team-based, problem-focused courses involving real-life management problems. My role in these courses is that of an expert-facilitator who provides feedback/coaching, and instructs them on the process (“how to”) of solving problems rather than the one right solution to the problem.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.

Students have benefited by developing a broader and deeper perspective regarding their content areas, communication/teamwork and professional skills. The community has benefited from the outcomes of these projects. For instance, a large manufacturer was able to develop an executive on-boarding process, a service-provider was able to develop programs to help retain their employees and a higher-education institution was able to implement a faculty engagement diagnostic tool. In addition, undergraduate students in my classes receive 360-degree feedback and reflect on the ways by which they can have a stronger positive impact on their community and careers.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
Engaged learning underscores that higher education is not simply about accumulating credits toward a certification; it’s about developing a skill set that students can draw upon to strengthen the communities in which they live.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
Last spring, I led a team of NIU students in a project to track nonviolent protests across the United States as part of a nationwide Crowd Counting Consortium. The Washington Post published our findings about who was protesting, why they were doing so and what tactics they used.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
The results of the Crowd Counting project helped amplify the voices of groups around the country who are exercising their rights to speech, expression and assembly.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
Learning through engagement with the subject in an active way is superior to simply memorizing facts from a book. Engaged learning connects with the emotional aspect of learning, and retention of that knowledge is long-lasting.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
My study abroad course in Tanzania requires students to work directly with NGOs in the communities we explore. Students learn firsthand the challenges and joys of learning while doing public service in poor communities.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
NIU students have helped to build a dormitory for 160 girls, to build a library and computer resource center and to create a business plan for a start-up, women-owned social enterprise, among many contributions during their study abroad program. And their reflective essays show they have a new view of themselves as well as of the world in which they live.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
I promote engaged learning in which the students are equally engaged with the object of study (in my case, literature, poetry, film, music, graffiti, urban art) and the social, political and economic context in which the object of study is produced. This multidisciplinary approach to learning challenges students to move beyond the art itself to also examine and understand its social conditions.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
One way I have exemplified engaged learning best practices is to utilize digital humanities projects in literature classes.

Students read various novels in which specific urban sites are mentioned, and then create hyperlinks of textual analyses of said novels (in the form of both videos and essays) on digital maps.

Please discuss how your work has impacted students, the community, the region, etc.
By combining geography and textual criticism, students gain two perspectives: 1) A better sense of place when reading the novels; and 2) A greater understanding of how novels make visible the lived-in city that is absent in maps.
Please provide your thoughts on why you believe engaged learning is important.
Engaged learning is important because it allows students to make direct connections between their coursework and the real world of education. Engaged learning allows us to practice what we preach. We consistently teach our teacher-candidates the importance of making connections, authenticity, engagement and hands-on learning. Therefore, it should be our responsibility to actually implement the same types of things we request of them.

Please identify at least one way that you have exemplified engaged learning best practices in your work.
Our students take field trips to an underserved school to directly work with young elementary students. While there, teacher-candidates help support first- and second-grade students by providing academic support and mentorship. We have received positive feedback from our candidates regarding their experiences with primary age children in Bellwood, Illinois. Teacher-candidates have opportunities as juniors and again as seniors to participate in the Open Doors Project. As seniors, they invite the second-graders to visit NIU’s campus to participate in a teacher-candidate-led tour and scavenger-hunt. Teacher-candidates consistently exemplify excellence as role models.
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