



**UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA**  
**COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING**

**2016/2017**

**COMMUNITY**  
**SERVICE-LEARNING**  
**ABRIDGED EVALUATION REPORT**

The following pages summarize the main findings from our CSL Evaluation Surveys of students, faculty/instructors and community partners. I would like to thank Winta Ghidei, our Evaluation Coordinator, and PhD student in Public Health, for producing the data and conducting the surveys. It is a large commitment that CSL makes to properly assess the learning outcomes and satisfaction with CSL and its processes, to both deepen student learning and build community partner capacity. I was thrilled to see that Winta was instrumental in achieving an 88% rate participation rate for the survey for students and instructors. That is an incredible achievement for a university survey, and it speaks to how students and CSL instructors want to contribute to the development of our program. Although our community partners had a lower participation rate (55%), that number still compares very well to other online surveys.

Winta summarizes well what we know about CSL according to our evaluations of students, community partners and instructors: CSL is perceived by all participant groups as an effective mode of community-university engagement and learning that they would recommend to their peers; and that they feel supported by the CSL team in integrating CSL into their courses and community projects. We also know from years of experience that our curricular CSL model does not always enable non-mediated connections between instructors and community partners, and we do not always achieve the perfect match between course learning goals and community projects. Yet these results do not dampen student, instructor and community partner enthusiasm to collaborate.

Yet it is time CSL takes a breath from our current evaluation model and reassesses where we have been, and what we want to know. In 2017/18 we will conduct a meta-evaluation of the last decade or so of our data, and then seek to design new ways to better get at the impacts that CSL is having for students, community partners and instructors. We will still run our surveys for new CSL courses, and survey new community partners and new instructors, but we will give everyone else a rest for 2017/18.

CSL looks forward to creatively working with you this coming year to gain new insights into how CSL is impacting student learning and civic engagement, instructors' co-construction of knowledge with community partners, and the social impacts the we are creating together.



David Peacock, PhD

Executive Director, CSL

## **METHODOLOGY**

The University of Alberta CSL program distributed surveys at the end of the Fall and Winter academic terms to CSL placement-based students, classroom-based students (those not choosing to do a placement in community), instructors, and community partners. Students and instructors filled out their evaluations during class time at the end of term. Community partners were emailed a link to an online survey using the Google Forms. The CSL Evaluation Coordinator used SPSS to calculate frequencies of the quantitative data.

## STATISTICS AT A GLANCE 2016-2017

Placement-based Students	Classroom-based Students**	Instructors	Community Partners
<p><b>1496</b> enrollments in CSL placements</p> <p><b>1309</b> students responded to the evaluation survey</p> <p><b>11%</b> working towards a CSL certificate</p> <p><b>83%</b> in a CSL course for the first time</p> <p><b>44%</b> were first generation university students</p>	<p><b>231</b> responded to evaluation survey</p> <p><b>75%</b> in a CSL course for the first time</p> <p><b>66%</b> volunteer outside CSL</p> <p><b>46%</b> were first generation university students</p>	<p><b>59</b> unique instructors</p> <p><b>52</b> responded to the evaluation survey</p> <p><b>29%</b> taught a CSL course for the first time</p>	<p><b>146</b> community partners</p> <p><b>78</b> community partners responded</p> <p><b>34%</b> involved in CSL for the first time</p> <p><b>66%</b> supervised university students prior to this term</p>
<p><b>Gender:</b> 74% female, 25% male, 1% other</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 68% are under 23 years</p> <p><b>Mean years of post-secondary education:</b> 3.6 years</p>	<p><b>Gender:</b> 71% female, 29% male</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 82% are under 23 years</p> <p><b>Mean years of post-secondary:</b> 2.9 years</p>	<p><b>Mean years of teaching:</b> 10 years</p> <p><b>Position:</b> 54% Contract Academic Staff, 2% Graduate Student, 4% Assistant Professor, 25% Associate Professor, 6% Full Professor</p>	<p><b>Mean of years worked in the non-profit sector:</b> 10 years</p> <p><b>Mean number of students mentored per term:</b> 8 students</p>

\*\*Students who enrolled in a CSL course but did not participate in a CSL placement

## CSL PLACEMENT STUDENT EXPERIENCES

### Satisfaction rate as a pedagogical process

**85%** CSL is an effective teaching/learning strategy

**80%** I would recommend CSL to my peers

### My involvement with CSL provided the opportunity to...

Reflect on my CSL experience **79%**

Think critically about classroom knowledge **82%**

Better contribute to class discussions and assessments **72%**

Use my classroom knowledge in the community **79%**

### Understanding of Social Change and Social Issues

*"It let me try and understand the complex issues different demographics phase and what we can do to help them. We work with newcomers so it was interesting to see how we can better integrate them into our society."* CSL student

*"I have become more aware of the challenges some women face who are in conflict with the law. Working with clients at the main office and giving these women free clothes was really nice as I was able to give them direct service. I believe that my role as a CSL student involved working to better understand the need for improvement and changes in the criminal justice system."* CSL student

### Program Structure and Communication

There was a good fit between the placement and the course **83%**

I knew enough about the aims/requirements of CSL **71%**

There was adequate communication between my instructor and me **85%**

There was adequate communication between my community partner and me **76%**

## Connections between course learning and placement learning

This experience provided me with the opportunity to use classroom knowledge in the community **79%**

This experience provided me with the opportunity to think critically about classroom knowledge **82%**

*"I believe that the CSL placement allowed me to have an impact on [school children's] education and understanding their course topics as I was able to assist students with understanding problems and questions they had about their [subject]."* CSL student

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## INSTRUCTOR EXPERIENCES WITH CSL

### Satisfaction rate as a pedagogical process

**94%** CSL contributed to students' learning

**86%** I would recommend CSL to my peers

### Benefits of Participating in CSL

CSL helped me deepen relationships with my students **69%**

CSL helped me develop relationships with the community **58%**

Including a CSL component helped me to improve my teaching skills **59%**

### Connections between course learning and community placement

Students' course work and class instruction enhanced their ability to understand community experience **83%**

CSL enhanced the classroom learning environment **81%**

## **Strategies I find most effective in integrating CSL into my course...**

Checking in with students **75%**

In class presentations/workshops by community partners **58%**

Checking in with partners **37%**

Inviting partners to class **50%**

Student assessment **67%**

## **Program Structure and Communication**

Overall, there was a good fit between the goals of this course and the community placements **85%**

There was adequate communication between myself and the community partners **59%**

Instructors received the type of support and assistance requested from the CSL staff **100%**

## **Quotes from Instructors:**

*"CSL is an excellent program that helps connect theory learned in classroom with community placements - where they meet practice."*

*"I believe there has been a change in the sense of community within people involved in CSL on campus. As a CSL instructor I don't feel all that connected to the program at this point. I will continue to teach using CSL, but sometimes I question staying connected with the CSL office."*

*"I was pleased with level of support from the CSL office in setting up my course."*

*"Keep it going and expand. The program is fantastic."*

*"The CSL office has been wonderfully supportive. I'd be happy to expand the CSL component of my course even further."*

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## COMMUNITY PARTNER EXPERIENCES WITH CSL

### Satisfaction rate as a pedagogical process

**86%** The placements significantly contributed to CSL students' learning

**99%** I would recommend CSL to my peers

### Benefits of Participating in CSL

CSL helped me develop relationships with students, instructors and the university  
**72%**

CSL helped me network with other community organizations **41%**

CSL helped our organization accomplish some of our project needs **82%**

CSL helped me develop mentoring skills **58%**

### Understanding of Social Change and Social Issues

CSL helped students understand some of the complexities of social issues  
**90%**

### Program Structure and Communication

CSL staff provided me assistance and support in integrating CSL into my work  
**58%**

I knew enough about the aims/requirements of CSL **75%**

There was adequate communication with students **83%**

There was adequate communication with instructors **71%**



## **Quotes from Community Partners:**

*"Access to student volunteers helped us expand the scope of our programming by providing a more intimate context through which learning could take place."*

*"Critical dialogue with program participants has led to revising program structure. Marketing tools developed by CSL student will make promotion much easier."*

*"CSL students have helped our organization meet specific needs as voiced by local community members."*

*"By working with our organization, I believe that the participating students had gained deeper insights into the struggles and the challenges faced by newcomers into the country."*

*"I think that the CSL Students saw the value of their work in the community and the breadth of how communities work together."*

*"CSL is a great opportunity for students to get connected to the community and to develop practical knowledge and skills."*

*"CSL is of great value to our non-profit. It provides skills and products that we don't have the capacity to provide. It motivates us to dream big by creating meaningful projects and seeking help from bright minds."*

## CONCLUSIONS

### **Key findings of the 2016-2017 CSL Evaluation at the University of Alberta include the following:**

Community service-learning continues to be seen by most students, instructors, and community partners as an effective pedagogical tool that they would recommend to others.

Instructors feel supported in integrating CSL into their work.

The fit between the placement and the course, along with differing expectations among students, and instructors, has improved over the years.

For CSL placement students, the most commonly stated benefit is the opportunity to meet and work with different people.

For community partners, the most commonly stated benefits are developing relationships with students, instructors and the university, along with helping their organizations accomplish project needs.

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To view the comprehensive 2016-2017 CSL Evaluation Report, please contact our Evaluation Coordinator at [ghidei@ualberta.ca](mailto:ghidei@ualberta.ca)

To learn more about the CSL program at the University of Alberta, please visit our website at [uab.ca/CSL](http://uab.ca/CSL)