UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
COMMUNITY SERVICE-LEARNING

2019 | 2020

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 Razak Orduro, our Evaluation Coordinator, and PhD student in Human Ecology, 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. Just as in the past, CSL through Razak's work was able to secure an 88% rate participation rate for the survey for students. We thank our students for contributing the quality of the CSL program through their feedback.

This year, we decided to change our surveying of instructors, so that only instructors new to CSL were given the survey. With so many surveys and other requirements of our instructors, we wanted to reduce their workload when teaching using CSL. For the Fall of 2019, CSL surveyed eleven new CSL instructors but only three completed surveys in the end, so a decision was made not to include that data in this evaluation. The three surveys we did receive matched the overall ratings instructors had given in previous years, we did not want to risk identification, and so have not reported the results here. Further, only data from Fall 2019 was used to conduct the evaluation. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March resulted in radically changed conditions for students, and evaluation was not feasible.

Nonetheless, the results below still paint a picture of a thriving CSL program, which all participants overwhelmingly agree is deepening student learning in courses and of community issues.

David Peacock, PhD

Director, CSL

Methodology

The University of Alberta CSL program distributed the surveys at the end of the term to CSL placement-based students and community partners. Students filled out their evaluations during class time at the end of term. Students were offered the choice of completing the survey either online through Qualtrics software suite or paper-based option. The survey for community partners was also completed through Qualtrics during the Fall 2019 term. The CSL Evaluation Coordinator used SPSS to calculate frequencies of the quantitative data. The method of evaluation for Fall 2019 did not include data from instructors. The CSL team moved from evaluating all instructors for every term to evaluate only new instructors to the CSL program. In this regard, the evaluation surveyed eleven (11) new CSL instructors. However, three (3) of these new instructors responded to the survey. This small number makes it difficult to calculate any frequencies on the data that would be statistically meaningful and helpful. Hence, a decision was made not to include that data in this evaluation. For the academic year 2019-2020, data from Fall 2019 was used to conduct the evaluation. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, evaluation for the Winter term was suspended.

STATISTICS AT A GLANCE 2019-2020

CSL students	Instructors**	Community Partners
1553 enrollments in CSL **789** enrollments for Fall 2019 **764** enrollments for Winter 2020 Fall 2019 surveys: *705 (89%)* students responded to the evaluation survey **497 (70%)** in a CSL course for the first time Gender: **74%** female, **25%** male, **1%** other Age: **86%** are under 24 years Mean years of post- secondary education: **2.5** years	**57** instructors 2019-2020 **11** new instructors for Fall 2019 **9** new instructors for Winter 2020 **Instructors' data not included in the evaluation	*184* community partners 2019 - 2020 **76** community partners for Fall 2019 *108* community partners for Winter 2020 Fall 2019 surveys: *25* community partners responded (33% participation rate) **52%** involved in CSL for the first time **48%** mentored CSL students for the first time Supervised university students before **81%**

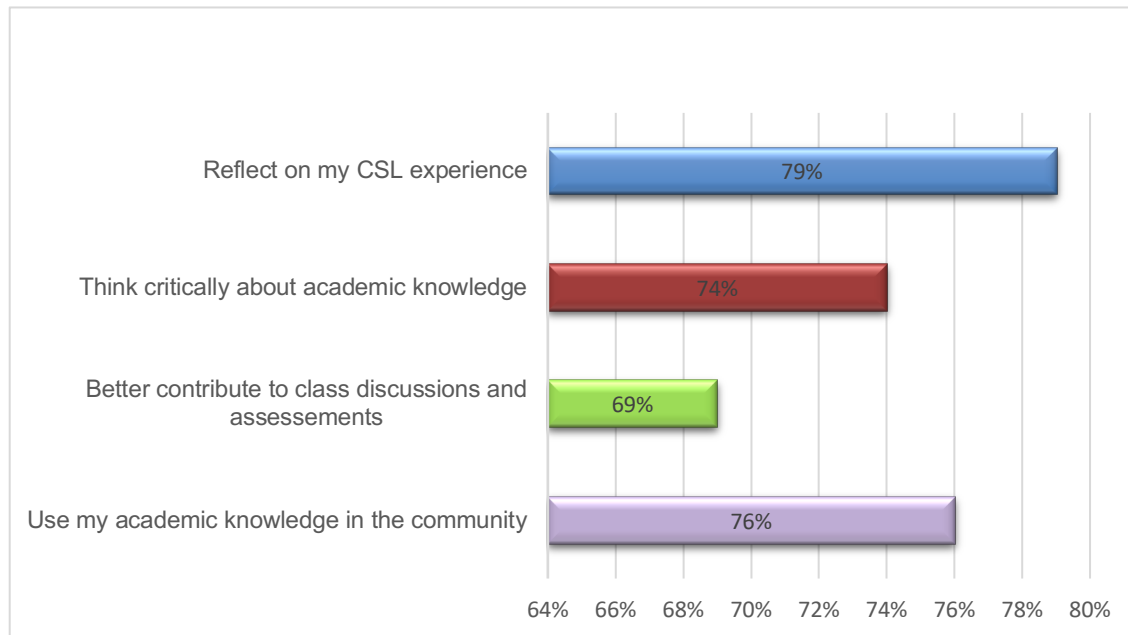|		Mean of years worked in the non-profit sector: **4 years** **48%** mentored CSL students for the first time Supervised university students before: **81%**

CSL Placement Student Experiences

Satisfaction rate as a pedagogical process
86% --- CSL is an effective teaching/learning strategy
80% --- I would recommend CSL to my peers
75% --- Coursework enhanced my ability to understand my community experience

My involvement with CSL provided the opportunity to…

Reflect on my CSL experience — 79%
Think critically about academic knowledge — 74%
Better contribute to class discussions and assessements — 69%
Use my academic knowledge in the community — 76%

Understanding of Social Change and Social Issues

"I gained knowledge of Edmonton's inner city though my placement. Also, I was able to meet with many community members who expanded my knowledge of those in marginalized communities in Edmonton".

"I gained an increased understanding about the factors implicated in running a community radio station. I also learned many things about effective communication techniques for radio and the workplace".

"I believe I gained administrative skills and problem-solving skills. Throughout my time at Radio Cité a few of the tasks required me to have knowledge on different software and organizational systems I'm not familiar with so I had to take the time to not only learn how to use these systems but also troubleshoot when problems arose".

Program structure and communication

There was a good fit between the placement and the course   76%
I had enough information about the aims/requirements of CSL   72%
There was adequate communication between my instructor and me   81%
There was adequate communication between my community partner and me   75%

Connections between course learning and placement learning

This experience provided me with the opportunity to use classroom knowledge in the community   76%
This experience provided me with the opportunity to think critically about classroom knowledge   74%

Community Partner Experiences with CSL

Satisfaction rate as a pedagogical process

99% --- the placements significantly contributed to CSL students' learning.
96% ---I would recommend CSL to my peers
99% --- CSL helped students understand some of the complexities of social issues

<u>Benefits of Participating in CSL</u>

CSL helped me develop relationships with students, instructors and the university   81%
CSL helped our organization accomplish some of our project needs   90%
CSL helped me develop mentoring skills   71%

<u>Program Structure & Communication</u>

CSL staff provided me assistance and support in integrating CSL into my work   67%
I knew enough about the aims/requirements of CSL   57%
There was adequate communication with students   **81%**

<u>Impacts of CSL students on community organization: views of community partners</u>

"Students provided fitness training for seniors at our centre. They were extremely helpful in helping seniors meet their goals and to motivate them to carry forward with an active lifestyle, promoting health and wellness in the senior sector".

"We were able to develop a thoroughly-researched and community-consulted presentation on the history of Indigenous veterans in Alberta".

"They were able to take over some aspects of our programming: teaching part of a class, offering workshops, etc."

"Students help our organization fill gaps that we could otherwise not fill - due to funding shortages etc. They also bring a fresh perspective."

Conclusions

Key findings of the 2019-2020 CSL Evaluation at the University of Alberta include the following:

- Community service-learning continues to be seen by most students and community partners as an effective pedagogical tool that they would recommend to others.
- For students, CSL continues to be a good fit between the placement and the course demonstrating relevance of the CSL program. Significantly, CSL placement made students aware of community organizations and the knowledge they generate
- Over the years, the fit between the placement and the course, along with differing expectations among students has improved significantly.
- The most commonly stated benefits of CSL placement students are the opportunity to enhance their skills, the opportunity to develop new relationships as well as being able to contribute to class discussions using knowledge from community experience.

- 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.

To view the comprehensive 2019-2020 CSL Evaluation Report, please contact our Evaluation Coordinator at roduro@ualberta.ca. To learn more about the CSL program at the University of Alberta, please visit our website at uab.ca/CSL.