Community Engagement

Learning Goal: The core curriculum gives students an engaging, intellectual experience. The Community Engagement goal also requires them to leave the classroom and engage with the world - to apply their intellectual experiences to communities beyond the academy. Students will actively and critically reflect upon these experiences and integrate them in their academic understanding of the world.

Learning Outcomes: Students will

1. Apply academic methods and/or theories in a way that promotes collaboration and mutual benefit in a community setting; and
2. Demonstrate critical reflection throughout their experience; and
3. Express their understanding of the interconnections between their experience and their responsibilities as members of social or professional communities.

Rationale (i.e., the intention of the proposed outcomes): Community Engagement is to be understood broadly as students engaging their academic learning with one or more partners in the community. Outcome #1 requires that Community Engagement be an academic experience. The term community is to be understood as broadly as possible, as any group of persons outside of the classroom. (Examples of such communities would include an elementary school in which a student might be teaching, a political organization, the SMC community or some section of it, an AIDS shelter, a financial institution, an engineering facility, a hospital, a prison, etc.) Outcome #1 also requires that the student partner with one of these communities in a way that responds to articulated community priorities and demonstrates a spirit of reciprocity. In outcome #2, critical reflection includes constructive observation, intellectual exploration, and recognition of the complexity of learning. Outcome #3 attempts to create space for students to integrate their learning, requiring that students reflect on the implications of their experience for their lives as citizens and members of community.