Community-based Learning at Johns Hopkins University

Community-based learning (CBL) is a pedagogical model that connects classroom-based work with meaningful community involvement and exchange. Within the context of equitable partnership, community organizations and students mutually benefit from the CBL experience both by meeting course objectives and addressing community-identified goals. Students may engage with groups including, but not limited to: nonprofits, government agencies, grassroots collectives, and other educational institutions.

The principles of CBL include:

- Faculty, students, and community groups collaborate toward mutually pursuing community-identified goals and academic course objectives.

- Courses provide adequate reading, reflection, and evaluation through research and other coursework; faculty meet their course objectives by preparing students for community entry, providing meaningful outlets for critical reflection, and presenting methods of rigorous evaluation.

- Academic credit is given for classroom and community learning, demonstrated in preparation, research, evaluation, and reflection.

This definition was developed by the Community-based Learning Working Group at Johns Hopkins University during the 2009 – 2010 academic year.