

Community-based research (CBR) is a collaborative process of critical inquiry into problems or issues faced by a community. Students and faculty members collaborate with community partners on applied research projects that address the problems or issues and promote social change. Research questions emerge from the needs of communities. The research process significantly involves community partners; the research is conducted *with* and *for* (not *on*) members of the community.

Using multiple methods of discovery, CBR aims not merely to generate knowledge but also to ensure that the knowledge generated contributes to making a concrete and constructive difference in the community. The goal of the research, then, is to produce and disseminate information that will benefit community members or agencies serving the community.

CBR tends to be discipline-specific and is therefore more likely to be delivered within the curriculum rather than as a co-curricular activity. As such, students learn research design, data collection, analysis, and reporting as part of their course. In the context of service-learning, the research itself constitutes the students' service to the community.

Benefits of CBR

For Students

- Opportunity for collaborative work with faculty and community partners
- Enhanced research skills
- Increased disciplinary knowledge
- Heightened awareness of community needs and assets
- Improved knowledge and skills for active citizenship
- Improved critical-thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills

For Faculty

- Innovative teaching and learning tool
- Hands-on opportunity for students to learn the knowledge and research skills of the discipline
- Opportunities for research and publication
- Heightened awareness of community needs and assets
- Collaboration with students and community partners in the improvement of communities
- Improved teaching outcomes through student engagement

For Community Partners

- Enhanced research and problem-solving capacity through collaboration with faculty and students
- Increased knowledge about program effectiveness through research
- Expanded capacity to advance the mission of the agency
- Improved systems and processes to address community problems and issues

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