

University of British Columbia's Department of Educational Studies and the Learning Exchange

Learning Exchange as a Hub of Experiential Learning

Stephanie Glick², Susan Grossman¹, Matt Hume⁴, Kathleen Leahy⁴, Jill Porter¹, Sara Sanabria³, Alison Taylor², Angela Towle⁴

¹Centre for Community Engaged Learning; ²Department of Educational Studies; ³Arts; ⁴Learning Exchange

Overview

The focus on experiential learning is growing across Canadian universities. Ideally, experiential learning provides opportunities for students to connect their classroom learning to paid or unpaid work off campus while benefiting both students' learning and community partner organizations. However, when relationships involve populations and communities that have been historically marginalized, the approach to these relationships requires more careful consideration.

Our projects explore what makes for effective community-engaged learning (CEL) partnerships between UBC and local communities with particular emphasis on Vancouver's Downtown Eastside (DTES).

Phase I (2017 – 2018)

The first phase of our project (2017 – 2018) focused on understanding the principles for effective partnership in Vancouver's DTES. Our background research was based on dialogues with community partners, students, and instructors/practicum facilitators. Find the resulting report on our blogsite: blogs.ubc.ca/experience/resources/

Phase II (2018 – Present)

In our second phase, we've been developing tools for those who are new to CEL and others who want to refine their ideas about engaging responsibly in co-creating reciprocal community-university partnerships. Our tools include a blog site which hosts a series of stories about cool partnerships as well as a podcast series. Work in this phase builds on the knowledge and resources provided by DTES community members via the UBC Learning Exchange (LE) and UBC's Centre for Community-Engaged Learning (CCEL).

2018 - 2019: Tools Developed



['Roots to Partnership': Teaching in and with Community \(Blogsite\)](#)

The *Roots to Partnership* blogsite features posts that provide an intimate peek into partnerships in the DTES community. Posts highlight the relationships between the community and university. Reflections are written by a variety of authors and include projects ranging from the Tech Cafes that operate in Oppenheimer Park, to interviews with UBC faculty introducing community engaged learning to their undergraduate students.



Dionne Pelan (left) of the UBC Learning Exchange and William Booth (right) of the DTES Adult Literacy Roundtable collaborate to provide free "Technology Cafés" in various locations in the DTES community.

To read stories from the field,
or to hear our podcast series check out:
<http://blogs.ubc.ca/experience/>

['Roots to Partnership': Teaching in and with Community \(Podcast Series\)](#)

Our *Roots to Partnership* podcast series explores what teaching in and with community looks like from various perspectives. Our guests include folks from community organizations, mostly from Vancouver's DTES, along with UBC professors, staff, and students with whom they partner. Themes we have and will be exploring in this series include:

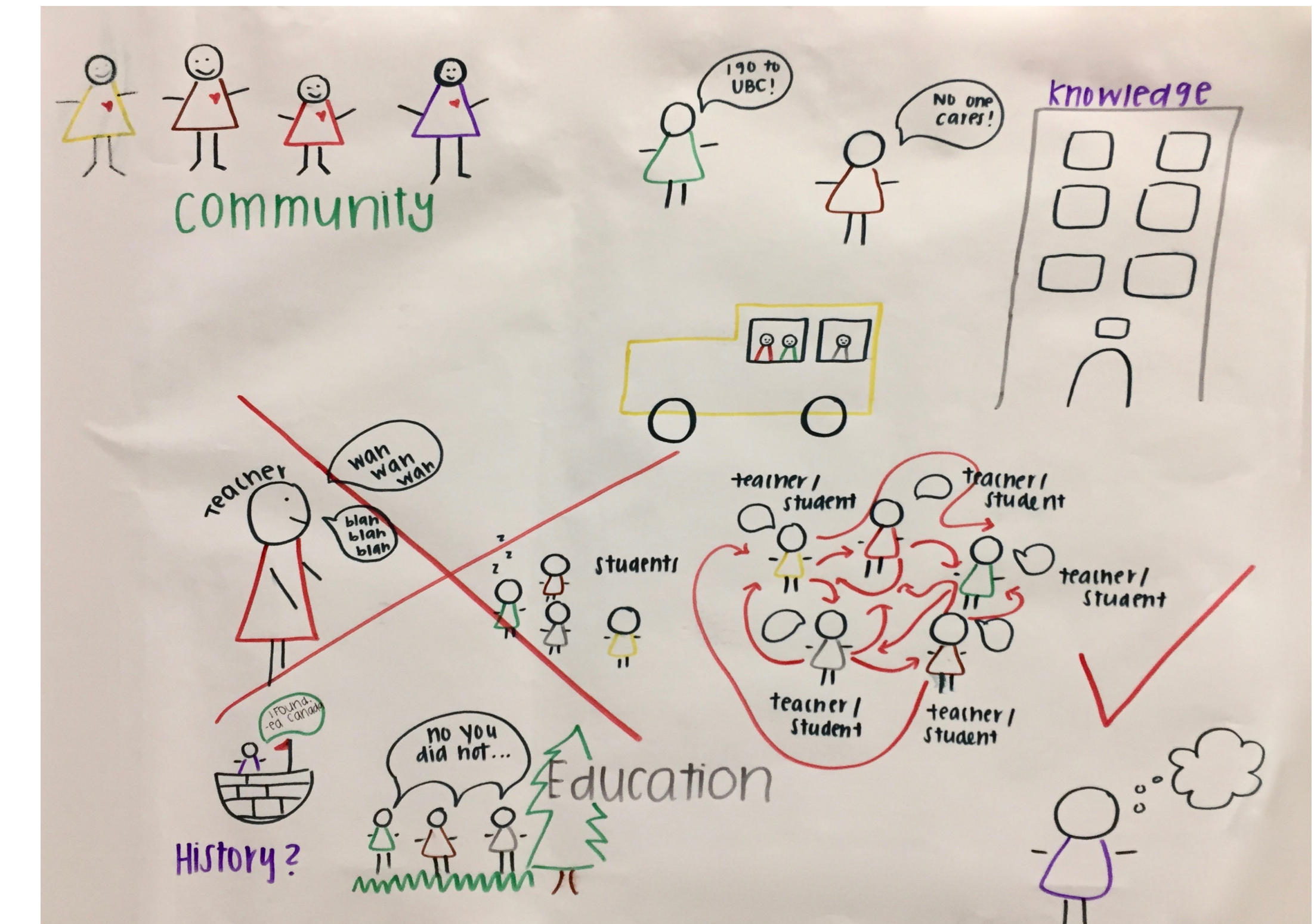
- Ethics and values that underpin effective CEL
- Guidance from Indigenous partners
- The spectrum of engagement that can occur in CEL
- Student reflections on CEL



Stephanie Glick (left) and Natalia Balyasnikova (right) recording at CITR Studios, 2018. Natalia's doctoral research addresses how older immigrants situate themselves in English speaking communities. As a CEL scholar, Natalia analyzes her own journey as someone who has benefitted from this type of research.

[Courses Taught & Courses Forthcoming](#)

ADHE 330: The Community Practice of Adult Education was held at the UBC Learning Exchange in 2017 and at both the Learning Exchange and UBC main campus in 2018. Both versions of the course emphasized the importance of understanding the social, economic, cultural, and political environment in developing and conducting adult education programs with marginalized communities.



Emily Conway (2019), a student in ADHE 330 illustrates a "moment of significant learning" during an in-class workshop facilitated by CCEL.

ADHE 330 (2018)

Our pilot course emphasized adult literacy and the kinds of adult learning programs taking place in Vancouver's DTES community.

ADHE 330 (2019)

This course emphasized adult education and the ethics of engagement. We focused on Kirkness & Barnhardt's (1991) 4Rs of Indigenous education in higher education: respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility.

ADHE 330 (Forthcoming)

The face-to-face version of the course, originally offered once per year, will be offered in both Winter I and Winter II during the 2019 – 2020 school year.

Acknowledgements

This project was researched, written, and produced on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples, including the territories of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), Stó:lō and Səlilwataʔ/Selilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

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