



Crosswalk Safety Project

Memphis, TN

This project was a partnership with Overton Park Conservancy, a park program in midtown Memphis that was interested in adding pedestrian walkways in multiple locations in the park. Primarily invested in producing crosswalks to ensure pedestrian safety and connecting green spaces across thoroughfares, the park communicated with affiliates to see if there was a way to create crosswalks with community support. After initial discussions, the community suggested the park explore artistic applications for the crosswalks, feeling that this could add a unique component to the park that reflected the spirit of the neighborhood. Because the city had not implemented artistic crosswalks before, new standards would need to be developed based on the city engineer core’s parameters, requiring an understanding of city development codes, particularly in regard to the regulations required of official crosswalks.

Goals

1. To create sidewalks in Overton park that foster walkability of the area and improve safety measures for pedestrians. 2. To create sidewalks in Overton Park that explore artistic applications of the community and engage the community in a citizen-inclusive design process.

Service Learning & Community Engagement Pedagogy

Students were encouraged to participate in the process to learn about public art and design intervention in community engaged project work. The project taught students about the citizen-inclusive design model that I implement in my research and practice working in the field with community members. This model applies an open, participatory process for community engagement in design intervention and action projects (arts-based community development projects) and supports active participation, fostering stronger community engagement to help empower participants as stakeholders throughout the entire process. Most notably, the method introduces designers as strategists and facilitators, while community members, take on the unique role of participant and maker in the intervention and monitoring phases. This particular strategy emphasizes the community’s ability and responsibility to actively contribute to the implementation phase of the design intervention and action projects that are planned for their communities.

Students learned how to collaborate on a team and work with one another to implement a large-scale design intervention project. They learned how to work with citizens in the process and assess community assets and resources for design intervention planning and implementation processes. They learned how to integrate these ideas into design concepts and assess the impact of the work upon completion.

Student/Participant Experience

Students and participants actively worked together in the creation of the community design intervention.

Community Experience

The project began with designers engaging in research methods—attending neighborhood association meetings with stakeholders, attending partner meetings with Overton Park Conservancy, reviewing crosswalk art in other cities, researching materials for implementation, and reviewing the core engineer’s city parameters and regulations set forth for public projects.

The designers created a range of concepts for consideration. Stakeholders identified areas for customization within the designs, and ultimately directed final designs and implementation plans for execution.

Teams of community members and students were established for the production of the work. Designers lead meetings on how to execute this type of project to scale including techniques for mapping out designs, discussions of appropriate use of materials, and possible challenges such as closing down the street during busy park times. Community members were also briefed on methods for preparing surfaces, painting on pavement, and protecting final work for longevity.

Community members and students installed three unique crosswalks over the course of three days, with one day prior needed for purchasing materials. Four teams were created; Team 1 was in charge of purchasing and distributing materials. Team 2, 3, and 4 were responsible for preparing, painting, and sealing a crosswalk. Each team included about 5 participants.

The project also included a management plan that required touchups to be done every 3-6 months. The management plan was adopted by the primary partner on the project, Overton Park Conservancy.

Faculty/Staff Experience

This project is one of many community engagement projects that have helped shape and have been shaped by my research methods in the field. Each project contributes to my personal and professional development by not only allowing me a venue to address and consider tangible social, economic, and/or cultural influence and change in my community via creative intervention, but also allows me to share this work beyond my community (reaching beyond regional boundaries) and beyond my discipline to teach and/or contribute to other sources and collections of knowledge and ideas.

Institutional Priority

This project aligned with Memphis College of Art’s initiative to advance community-based project work (and instruction) within the institution and actively participate in the communities of Memphis outside of the institution. It also fostered collaborative partnerships and cross-disciplinary pursuits within and beyond the institution, which was highly encouraged and valued.

Future Goals

I’m currently an Assistant Professor at East Carolina University and working on a community engagement project in Uptown Greenville, NC with partner, Pitt County Arts Council. This project has been developed through the Engagement Outreach Scholars Academy at ECU: <https://rede.ecu.edu/engagement/programs-and-initiatives/eosa/2019-eosa-scholars/>. Participants of the project include community members from NC Civil, TRUNA, PCAC, Uptown Greenville, ECU and others as interested and engaged in the project.

This project implements and expands on my research which considers how design interventions can improve and/or expand on the economic, cultural, and community development of communities by contributing to the community’s sense of place through the addition of activity-programming, cultural-historical context, social-spatial interactions, etc.

The project employs my citizen-inclusive, participatory model (mentioned in this case study) for designing and implementing a design intervention in Uptown Greenville. The research will measure the affected change and impact of a citizen-inclusive design intervention implemented in the Uptown Greenville community. The impact analysis will measure the affected change of 3 outcomes. The design intervention’s ability to (1) improve and/or expand on the economic, cultural, and community development in Uptown Greenville (2) establish and/or expand on Greenville’s sense of place in the Uptown community and (3) reflect and/or bring in/engage/embrace Greenville’s diverse, multicultural audience.



In the System

Mt. Pleasant, MI

“In the System” was a Graphic Design capstone exhibition developed over a six month period by 18 Central Michigan University Graphic Design seniors in 2016-2017. What started out as an investigation into an increasingly well-documented yet still generally avoided research topic became a community education project with a direct interface to the prison population.

Goals

To critique the American Penal System, to make public to our community some of this system’s more egregious problems, to better understand prison from the prison population’s point of view, to give that population a voice.

Service Learning & Community Engagement Pedagogy

“In the System” involved weeks of viewing, reading, and discussing research about its central topic. Through visits to local and state prison facilities, it taught awareness of both the difficulties and limitations of being incarcerated. A letter-writing campaign to currently incarcerated citizens resulted in their responses being utilized in a series of portraits of the respondents, humanizing what is otherwise a dehumanizing experience.

Student/Participant Experience

“In the system” enabled students to reevaluate their attitudes toward the prison population while better understanding the recent history of the penal system. The project encouraged students to reconsider a designer’s possible roles in society as a communicator and social catalyst. Using holistic thinking, one student built a timeline of 60 years of prison construction out of cinder blocks, the very material of prison construction. Another created an 8’x16’ wall map of all the prison facilities in America.

Community Experience

Since “In the System” was an extremely popular and well-attended university exhibition, with extensive local and regional media coverage including television, the project built more than capacity. Many of the over 900 visitors to the two-week exhibit logged in and left their thumbprint in the register, as they might do when entering a prison. The exhibit communicated with a broad segment of Lower Michigan. We know this because media coverage meant the project also encountered conservative backlash on social media. This was not unexpected, but the viciousness of such responses can be intense.

Faculty/Staff Experience

There is no doubt that this project, part of the ART 472 Graphic Design Capstone, resulted in the faculty member’s professional development, and contributed to the personal and social growth of students. Cross disciplinary collaboration took place through the faculty experts in architecture and public relations— professionals with extensive prison study experience— who helped mentor students.

Institutional Priority

“In the System” advanced Central Michigan University’s core mission to interact with its community and extend its service-learning student experiences. In 2018 the university purchased the Prison Portrait series for its Art On Campus collection, notifying the participating prison inmates.

Future Goals

I don’t know as I can limit the future to three goals. I will teach this course again in 2021. It will be my continuing intention to expose students to socially relevant topics in both their research and professional practice. Each group is unique, and each learning experience evolves toward its own original end. CMU students in general are often focused on a commercial career, and I do everything possible to offer them alternatives. Our future community partners have yet to be determined.



Project Pipeline Architectural Mentorship Program

Charlottesville, Virginia

The National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) Project Pipeline Architectural Summer Camp aims to increase the number of underrepresented minorities, especially African-Americans, pursuing careers in architecture and design. During the summer of 2019, the University of Virginia (UVA) School of Architecture piloted its first version of Project Pipeline in partnership with our National Organization of Minority Architects Student Chapter and the Charlottesville Public Housing Association of Residents PHAR (Piedmont Housing Association of Residents). Funded through the Jefferson Trust and supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the program provided a two-week intensive design experience for seven African American youth designed to improve their pathways to pursue design education and engaged UVA students in learning from and mentoring young people in local K-12 school systems. <https://news.virginia.edu/content/project-pipeline-makes-architecture-more-accessible-encourages-high-school-students>

Goals

Overall goals include changing institution-al culture, deepening recruiting efforts, and providing multi-scalar and student peer men-torship opportunities for underrepresented potential applicants, current students, faculty, and staff. The design goal of the program produced three design concepts for a new ecological nature park for Charlottesville’s South First Street Housing Community, utilizing a large ash tree currently on site.

Service Learning & Community Engagement Pedagogy

The program utilized specifically designed empathy-based exercises to introduce design inquiry for youth in the design studio, and with PHAR community leaders initiating the ecological nature park. Program faculty produced curriculum exercises to build confidence and awareness with youth to assess the needs of our community leaders of the South First Street site, including on -site interviews in the community and at regional precedents. Reflecting on findings, students designed in collaborative teams to achieve stakeholder goals. The program culminated with training for final community design reviews with stakeholders. Faculty invested in spatial and social justice public interest design led curriculum, with examples of current work such as the Friendship Court Charlottesville Housing Project, and the installation of the Charlottesville Memorial for Peace and Justice (from the Montgomery Equal Justice Initiative). Civic responsibility continues through design exercises and references of African American designers and artists to influence beliefs on the role of black creativity in the American landscape, culminating with a field trip to the NMAAHC. Curriculum included context tours of Jefferson’s Academical Village from the perspective of the enslaved, the Downtown Mall with local landscape architects, visits to local wood fabricators to test design ideas, and design reviews with the current local architect directly working with the South First Street Community / PHAR. These experiences, combined with working in design teams at the school’s studio space, provided platforms with first-hand knowledge of cooperative and collaborative problem solving to develop three design concepts for the site.

Student/Participant Experience

Students learn the cultural landscape of Charlottesville and Washington, D.C., evolving a personal understanding of African American design thinking, realizing the impacts of African Americans in the build environment. The program created an understanding that design creativity is an innate, as well as learned set of skills to direct positive social change, demonstrated in curriculum examples. Faculty goals included design methods for students to implement during and after completion of the program. Collaboration methods learned in the design studio, boosted confidence and understanding to personal values to build in their own community, respecting stakeholder needs. By engaging in direct conversation and interactions with current design professionals on community projects, students learned of the political, social, and cultural role of design, and methods of community engagement. Students emerge from the program with deeper understanding of fellow community leaders, members, and citizens, designing a new space of which their own families and friends will visit. By creating an inclusive, positive and democratic design environment, students presented three design

concepts for the nature park at the South First Street Community Center.

Community Experience

The summer program initiated through existing community relationships maintained by program faculty Professor Barbara Brown Wilson, a funding requirement by the University’s Jefferson Trust. Students, community leaders, and program supporters were included in an exhibition detailing the activities and design results of the program, as well as VIP guests at the School’s Dean’s Forum Inclusion and Equity Lecture with Deanna Van Buren to continue collaborations in September. The exhibition is displayed for one month as part of the School’s Centennial celebrations. The work of the program continues this fall with four students from the program working with two undergraduate student leaders to refine designs while the City prepares the site for the installation of a pedestrian bridge. Meetings in the summer with local wood fabricators, and continual community meetings with the local architect continue to support the work, currently aiming for a spring 2020 opening. Links between the community and the University continue with all faculty connected with the summer program continuing to develop the designs with community stakeholders.

Faculty/Staff Experience

Faculty and student mentors learned new pedagogical skills with social, cultural, and racial perspectives for connecting with local youth, developing new techniques of active listening and collaborative support. As a project team, leadership for the program developed a day to day sharing of ideas, details, and innovations to facilitate successful interactions between students, becoming stronger throughout. The confidence shown by students at the final presentations in the community, as well as continued engagement in the fall of 2019, demonstrated the personal, social, and professional growth of the participants. Also, one student of the program intends to advance her transfer from a local community college to begin her design education at the School of Architecture in 2020.

Institutional Priority

In the summer of 2018, the UVA School of Architecture adopted an Equity and In-clusion Plan that set new priority actions and goals (<https://www.arch.virginia.edu/about/inclusion-equity>). The plan notes the racial homogeneity of professions of architecture, landscape architecture, and planning, how that results in a loss for the fields without the incredibly important perspectives of so many creative minds and commits to developing new programs to change that pattern locally.

The program is a prototype and starting point for developing approaches necessary for longer-term efforts within the School of Architecture. The Inclusion and Equity Committee’s plan recognizes the gap between our ideals of democracy and the specific structures of inequity that have structured and continue to shape our institution and our broader social worlds.

Shifting these existing dynamics will require sustained, reflexive engagement with past and present failures as we work together to realize our aspirations. Change in our institution is not simply a project of including more people of varied backgrounds, identities, and experiences at the table, but of committing ourselves to the sustained, critical re-thinking of our institutional policies, practices, structures, and culture. We aim to move beyond an assimilationist model of inclusion to build the capacity for expanding access and redistributing power through a self-reflexive process of questioning and rethinking systemic inequities, biases, and norms.

Future Goals

Design Development

The continuation of the design with four students from the summer program with community stakeholders, a local design firm, and the local manufacturer to develop the designs for production in early 2020.

Program Development

The success of the program initiated interest in funding opportunities from alumni connected to Inclusion and Equity efforts of the School of Architecture, with goals of defining the next iteration of the program.



Powerful Conversations on Race

Martin Luther King Center, Indianapolis, IN

Our collective inability to talk with each other about the history of race and racism, what it means, and how it impacts our daily lives, is one of the most urgent issues of American life. “Powerful Conversations on Race” (PCR) (www.racedialogues.org) was a successful discussion series designed and implemented in collaboration with 21 community-based, volunteer facilitators under the auspices of Spirit & Place (www.spiritandplace.org), part of the IU School of Liberal Arts at IUPUI, Indianapolis, Indiana,

Grounded in the Civic Reflection Dialogue (CRD) facilitation method pioneered by Elizabeth Lynn at Valparaiso University, PCR utilized artworks, humanities-based texts, and other media to create space for public reflection and dialogue on this difficult topic. The series, which launched in 2017 and continued through 2018, was built around the book Charleston Syllabus: Readings on Race, Racism and Racial Violence (Williams, Williams, Blain, 2016) and other source materials to catalyze community conversation around race.

Goals

The goals of the series were to:

1. Create conversational space for residents to unpack difficult racial histories in the U.S, understand the contemporary relevance of these histories, and build confidence in carrying this newly acquired knowledge and dialogue skills back into their individual and community life.
2. Build community capacity to host additional community-based discussions around race and/or other critical civic topics.
3. Anchor the work in the values of community access and ownership.
4. Nourish the local ecosystem of race-centered work by offering a unique, conversation-centered practice.
5. Leverage and highlight the role of the arts and humanities as valuable instruments for civic learning and community building.

Service Learning & Community Engagement Pedagogy

REFLECTION PRACTICES:

The CRD methodology provided a strong format for reflective and conversational practices.

- Participants collectively share (aloud) an evocative work such as a poem, historic document, piece of literature, or artwork/media.
- A structured questioning method encourages participants to dig deep by asking questions of clarification, interpretation, and implication.
- When the conversation veers off, the facilitator guides it back to the shared material, where the conversation remains rooted.

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY:

- Rooting the conversations in historic materials reminds participants of the contemporary importance of learning about and grappling together with unpleasant and complex histories and how those histories impact contemporary society.
- The CRD method develops stronger commitments to civic life, enhances ability to understand diverse perspectives, strengthens community networks, and improves critical thinking, active listening, among others.

COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING:

- PCR was co-created and executed in collaboration with 21 community facilitators who represented diverse sectors, e.g. higher education, social service, and more.
- Facilitator pairs (always one white and one person of color) worked collaboratively to select specific readings/materials and independently designed their own sessions within the CRD framework.

Surveyed participants reported that their views on race had shifted with 39% reporting “a lot,” 35% reporting “a moderate amount,” 17% reporting “a great deal,” and 9% reporting “a little.”

Surveyed participants also reported on other impacts with 37% reporting they sought out additional information, 31% reporting their actions were influenced by PCR, 19% reporting that they shared conversation materials with others, and 13% reporting that they made valuable connections with other participants.

Student/Participant Experience

The following per the Project on Civic Reflection:

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: Reflection and dialogue help individuals better understand the complexities of civic work and their own purpose in relation to public service. Through exposure to civic reflection, individuals develop a stronger commitment to civic life.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: In addition to the development of skills such as facilitation and critical thinking, individuals develop a number of leadership qualities through civic reflection discussions. These qualities include the ability to understand diverse perspectives, build relationships across difference and clearly articulate one’s own thoughts and beliefs.

DIALOGUE ACROSS DIFFERENCES: Civic reflection can have a profound impact on how people talk across difference. Civic reflection conversations often provide a deeper understanding of one’s own choices and values, and a forum to better understand the diverse perspectives of others.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Civic reflection engages diverse people in meaningful conversations, helping them to understand themselves and their communities. This leads to strengthened community relationships and deepened networks within and across communities.



RETENTION AND SUSTAINABILITY: Groups practicing ongoing civic reflection have experienced increased retention and renewal rates, deepened volunteer commitment, and strengthened relationships with staff, volunteers, and the communities they serve. Civic reflection reminds people why they do what they do and makes their work more sustainable in the process.

SKILL-BUILDING: The practice of civic reflection helps individuals build tangible skills that translate directly to increased effectiveness at work and improved relationships through service. From critical thinking and analysis, to active listening and facilitation skills, a broad skill-set is developed through civic reflection trainings and discussions.
Community Experience

COMMUNITY CAPACITY

- Facilitators trained in CRD are now using these skills in other environments. For example: (1) a PCR facilitator has trained local artists how to use CRD to manage community dialogue for an upcoming event, (2) another facilitator has used the experience to launch a variety race-based discussion built around books for a variety of community institutions.
- According to the Center for Civic Reflection, CRD helps participants understand themselves and their communities, leading to strengthened relationships and deepened networks within and across communities.

LINKING COMMUNITY AND CAMPUS

PCR resulted at the confluence of campus and community partnerships. Spirit & Place was introduced to Professor Keisha Blaine (co-editor of The Charleston Syllabus) through the Trailblazers program of the IUB / IUPUI Graduate Mentoring Center. We assisted the Mentoring Center in organizing community discussions around Blaine’s work. We found her work powerful and continued to maintain communication with her.

We had also developed a multi-dimensional relationship with Child Advocates, a social service agency. Child Advocates has offered Undoing Racism workshops in Central Indiana for 8+ years, which has led to more than 6,500 residents of Central Indiana to examine racism from a historical, systemic, and personal perspective. Powerful Conversations on Race is the result of bringing these two worlds together and utilizing a framework for community discussions we had developed in partnership with Kheprw Institute, a grassroots, youth empowerment organization. During 2016 and 2017, we partnered with Kheprw Institute to host monthly conversations on gentrification and equity issues. These series were extremely popular and we used them as a model for how to move PCR forward.

Faculty/Staff Experience

- All staff and volunteer facilitators have benefit greatly from the 2-day Civic Reflection Dialogue training. The training included a special focus on race-based conversations and all had the opportunity to practice those skills prior to facilitating community discussions.
- Facilitator debriefs were held after each community discussion. This included those facilitating that day and those simply attending. This provided a quick cycle of reflection, learning, and support for facilitators.
- A Spirit & Place staff member is using CRD for a book group in her neighborhood that is reading Waking Up White.
- Child Advocates’ Undoing Racism training sessions now include a handout about the PCR series, and it is recommended as a next step for activating their learning and developing vital conversational skills around race.

Institutional Priority

Spirit & Place has a 24-year history of bringing people together to explore important ideas and issues through conversation, collaboration, and creativity. Powerful Conversations on Race clearly aligns with this history, as well as our mission to catalyze civic engagement through creative collaborations among the arts, humanities and religion. We also support the missions of the School of Liberal Arts and the campus by demonstrating how the arts and humanities are critical, community-building tools for civic life.

Also, PCR has advanced Spirit & Place’s role as an important civic resource for grappling with complex and difficult conversations. The Central Indiana Community Foundation, which has recently added fighting systemic racism to their mission statement, invited us to become an “investment partner,” which would secure funding (outside the competitive process) to continue PCR for 3-5 years. They are also sponsoring our annual festival’s keynote event this November, which features Nikole Hannah-Jones, lead journalist for the NY Times 1619 Project.

Future Goals

Spirit & Place is an emergent strategy. This means that we are fundamentally relational, adaptive, interdependent, decentralized, fractal, and transformative in the ways that we work. As such, we strive for sustainability as it relates to impact, increased civic capacity, strength of community ownership, and program adaptation in other environments (by others), rather than the continuation of specific program models within Spirit & Place. Our role is to create the crucibles that activate individual transformation and spark new community-centric variations that strengthen communities.

Pending external funding, our goals for Powerful Conversations on Race over the next five years are as follows:

1. **TRAINING:** Train up to 100 facilitators in the CRD methodology (specific to race), conduct a train-the-trainer program so that we can continue teaching CRD skills in our community and continuously offer CRD training for years to come, infusing the community with skilled individuals who can use these techniques to explore race and other social justice and equity issues in diverse environments.
2. **CONVERSATIONS:** Repeat the PCR series locally for 4 years and experiment with new formats, as requested by the community. Our surveys show community interest in a series for families with children, a series on whiteness/white privilege, among others.
3. Explore the creation and distribution of free tool kits and best practice guidelines, as well as a need-based and tiered fee-for-service consulting service (delivered by S&P and/or community facilitators), to help diverse organizations and communities adapt the “Powerful Conversations on Race” model using equitable community engagement practices.
4. Conclude the work at the end of five years.



Reimagining the Davis Amtrak Station

Davis, CA

During the Spring Quarter of 2019 my Human-Centered Design class at UC Davis worked with the city of Davis, CA to reimagine the Amtrak station and the surrounding areas. I developed the project with Rachel Hartsough, the Arts and Culture Manager for the City of Davis with the aim of supporting a larger study by the city to explore ways to improve the station, decrease traffic congestion and encourage biking and public transportation to and from the station. Utilizing a human-centered approach to the challenge, the class interviewed potential users, developed a unique frame on the challenge, then developed concepts, prototyped the ideas, tested them, and then finally, presented their findings to a group of consultants and city officials at Davis City Hall.

- Goals
- Teach students the process of human-centered design
 - Demonstrate the way human-centered design can inform real-world project
 - Bring the voice of citizens and riders into the conversation for the City’s planning efforts
 - Provide a sense of nuance to known issues for the project

Service Learning & Community Engagement Pedagogy

This project [1] Integrated reflection practices into learning as a core part of the project. The human-centered approach at the center of this project is a reflective process at its core. The “framing” portion of this type of work requires deep analysis and reflection. Students must analyze the concrete things they saw and heard and then explore what deeper meanings those observable phenomenon might suggest. To do this, I utilize a number of frameworks including empathy maps, questioning techniques, generic parts diagrams, guides, and stories to guide them towards powerful reflections. The project also addresses issues of citizenship through the students engagement with members of the community who they may not meet as part of their everyday lives. During the project, they were asked to go to the train station and interview people and learn about their lives. This simple act of listening is at the heart of being a good citizen. And finally, it actively promotes collaborative problem solving because the students are working in teams, and those teams are working with a variety of entities from the City of Davis, to Amtrak and downtown business.

Student/Participant Experience

This project brings a students’ personal ethics into play through the way they are asked to define a meaningful approach to the challenge. Students are asked to focus on users’ needs, rather than their own, but rather than merely following what users said, the students must interpret what they said, build upon it, and ideally, develop a solution that helps the users feel seen and heard. Unlike a project where a student can communicate her ethics (for example, a poster to promote composting), this project provides a more complicated, and therefore realistic version of the way their ethics exist in the messiness and conflict of a community where various stakeholders may not always agree. I

challenged students to find ways to combine their ethical positions with the deeper needs being expressed by users.

Community Experience

This particular project is one of many that I have done in partnership with the City of Davis. I have partnered with the city and class projects during each quarter that this class is offered. During that period, I have created projects that help to make the city more attractive for recent graduates, reimagine a dilapidated plaza in the downtown area, drive engagement with the city’s green spaces and reimagine one of the city’s most iconic parks. I believe the ongoing nature of this collaboration speaks to the mutual benefits between the city and the campus. In each of these instances, the students have presented their findings at City Hall to a growing group of interested City Officials and outside stakeholders. The partnership has been successful enough that in Fall of 2019, the class project is to Reimagine the Railcar for Amtrak’s Capital Corridor. The main point of contact at Amtrak was at the student presentations for the project in June 2019 and was eager to have the students use this kind of approach on challenges that they are exploring.

Faculty/Staff Experience

I come to academia from industry. I have been a practicing designer for over 20 years. As such, I know how much learning can happen in a professional context and I believe that students learn best when they understand how their student projects will relate to the issues they will face once they are out of school. Throughout the course I reference the ways I undertook similar challenges and used similar methods in my work as a designer within industry. In addition, the fact that we have a partner who acts as a “client” gives the students the opportunity to think about the ways they need to communicate to a variety of stakeholders. This pushes them to be able to talk about their work in a variety of ways and communicate with design specific language in some instances, but also to translate what they did into higher levels of abstraction so that their process is legible to non-designer and community members. Many students have reflected that this project is “more like an internship” than a class and many of them come away talking about the ways that what they learned can be applied to all sorts of future jobs.

Institutional Priority

UC Davis strives to “serve students by aligning resources with opportunities to foster curiosity, engaged citizenship and academic success”. This project acts as a stage in which these ideals are embodied. Academic success in this class is contingent upon a student’s ability to use their curiosity as a way to develop care and understanding of people who have a very different outlook. By synthesizing the perspectives of others with their own histories and experiences they are able to forge new ideas. These new ideas are not only solutions to a concrete project challenge, but also act as representations of the possibility of community where multiple perspectives can co-exist.

Future Goals

Increase students’ ability to address challenges with no clear answers
Forge stronger connections between the community and UC Davis
Highlight the power of human-centered design as tools for enhancing communities



Rust2Green Utica Capstone Studio

Utica, NY

The Rust to Green (R2G) Capstone Studio in Landscape Architecture was held for 6 consecutive years (2011-2016) at Cornell. It was taught by Paula Horrigan who designed it to support the R2G Action Research Project she was also spearheading and which has been unfolding in Utica, NY, as R2G Utica, since 2010. Because it was designed to support R2G, the Capstone was intentionally developed as a service-learning course modeled on democratic civic engagement, teaching community design and placemaking, and bringing together university and community collaborators to work on actionable placemaking and community development projects in Utica. The studio echoed the relational nature of the larger R2G initiative in which it was embedded and helped foster greater university-community reciprocity, mutual trust, and community capacity. Engaged Cornell is now supporting a 2-year R2G Collaborative Evaluation Project studying R2G’s impact on students–professionally, academically and personally– as well as on the Utica community.

Goals
Teaching and learning democratic design theories and practices and specifically community design and placemaking; Engaging in actionable placemaking in Utica NY through placemaking collaborations with community partners; Building and fostering placemaking, community development and capacity contributing to greater urban sustainability and resilience in Utica and NY’s Rust Belt region.

Service Learning & Community Engagement Pedagogy
The Rust to Green (R2G) Capstone Studio was created to support the R2G Action Research Project unfolding in Utica NY as R2G Utica (2010-present). From the outset, as participants in the 5-credit Capstone during 6 Spring semesters (2011-2016), students from landscape architecture have acted as key contributors to the R2G effort. R2G’s praxis is best framed and defined as placemaking– a democratic design process and purpose that fosters greater environmental justice, equity, community empowerment, and ecological and landscape democracy. Because it was designed to support R2G, the Capstone was intentionally developed as a service-learning course modeled on democratic civic engagement, teaching community design and placemaking, and bringing together university and community collaborators to work on actionable placemaking and community development projects in Utica. It was designed to expose students to placemaking’s inherent democratic design practices and habits in hopes that they, as future practitioners, would begin to distinguish how design involves ethical choices and can either hinder or encourage greater democracy, civic engagement and place belonging. Over the semester, the Capstone emphasized collaborative problem-solving–with peers working in teams, faculty mentors, and community mentors and collaborators–achieved through participatory design convenings, workshops, meetings and dialogues. Students were exposed to community design and placemaking theory and practice –in readings and case studies– and above all, through directly engaging in placemaking with community collaborators. In the Capstone reflection happening during in-class group reflection sessions, via individual written and videoed critical incident reflections and assignments, peer-to-peer dialogues, and pre- and post-reflections.

Student/Participant Experience
For student participants the R2G Capstone required learning and developing, usually for the first time, not only placemaking tools and methods for encouraging greater democratic engagement and co-creation but also reflection practices and relational collaboration with student peers and also community collaborators. And it often required such tasks as organizing, activism, and shared decision-making. Together this was a tall order for students whose prior studio experiences may have tended towards more narrowly framed design assignments with far more limited, if any, community interaction. Such a tall order often caused agitation and disruption and led students to ask, “is this design?” or “what has this got to do with design,” or “when do we get to design?” For students, there’s no question the emergent unpredictability and relational complexity of ‘design in action’ with and in a community, proved challenging. So did being taught and mentored by a more socially engaged ‘activist’ professor/mentor, employing engaged practices and pedagogy, after having been ‘professionalized’ in more traditional courses and studios. Reflection exercises and interactions definitely enabled unpacking and examination of critical incidents, challenges, successes, personal values and ethics and professionals’ role in society. It’s difficult to gauge whether the R2G Capstone experience actually promoted and encouraged greater civic responsibility and the development of citizenship skills. A number of students chose AmeriCorps Vista and public practice after graduation and we are hoping more insights will surface –through the R2G Collaborative Evaluation Project– regarding how student participants feel their experience affected them professionally, educationally and personally.

Community Experience
The sustained R2G Utica community-university partnership is itself an outcome of the R2G

Action Research Project. It has been instrumental in building and fostering community capacity and change, from the ground-up, across the long term. The Capstone studio played a pivotal role as one of several different avenues through which students and faculty participated in R2G and contributed to community capacity building. Through the studio, students acted as a conduit linking academic, professional and local knowledge and resources to one another. The Capstone’s placemaking and engagement focus attracted and guided a youthful, optimistic student cohort that was charged with imagination and eager to interact with real people and places. Rather than casting them in a role as experts, the studio mentored students to embrace placemaking praxis and to seek and discover design solutions emerging through relational behaviors and processes that honored and encouraged the networking and combining of community and university knowledge. The studio echoed the relational nature of the larger R2G initiative in which it was embedded and helped foster greater university-community reciprocity, mutual trust, and community capacity. In Utica, several lead partners emerged to sustain and fund R2G Utica (CCE Oneida, City of Utica and Community Foundation). Jointly, with Cornell, in 2014 they established an R2G Urban Studio in City Hall. In 2018, R2G Utica, Inc. established as a non-profit fiscally sponsored by the Community Foundation. Approximately \$7M in state and federal funding has been secured for implementing community development projects directly arising from the partnership.

Faculty/Staff Experience
Personally and professionally, the R2G Capstone enabled me to bring my teaching in closer alignment with my passion for placemaking and democratic design, my service-learning pedagogy and action research knowledge, and my commitment to community-engaged design and research promoting greater resilience and sustainability in NY’s Rust Belt region where I live and which surrounds Cornell. It also challenged me to be a better teacher, designer and scholar, to dive deeper and to more closely interrogate and inspect the systems and structures at work in the community, at my university and in academia more broadly, and also in the landscape architecture profession. R2G has opened me to and drawn me into a larger community of collaborators in different fields (engineering, planning, sociology, adult ed, natural resources, fine arts, architecture, human ecology) and created new opportunities for collaboration. But, it has also exposed challenges and difficulties associated with collaborating and transcending disciplinary boundaries. There’s no question R2G has directly grown out of and also motivated engagement with a broader peer community through, for example, the Erasing Boundaries Project, EDRA, IARSLCE, Center for Landscape Democracy and the Public Interest Design Network. It is my hope that R2G has contributed to the social, personal and professional growth of students and community participants. Some evidence of its impacts has been provided by interviews, stories and reflections as well as long sustained relationships with community partners. Certainly it is my hope that the R2G Participatory Evaluation Project will further reveal its contribution to students and community.

Institutional Priority
Community-engaged student learning has been central to R2G from day one and is now a mission focus of Engaged Cornell which regards R2G as a model initiative. To support student learning R2G faculty have created high quality learning experiences taking the form of service-learning courses like the R2G Utica Capstone Studio. R2G engaged scholarship has also been integrated into other existing Cornell courses and new curricula and workshops have been created to support R2G. R2G faculty have mentored R2G thesis and exit projects and summer-long student R2G Civic Fellowships providing engagement opportunities in Utica as well as in Binghamton, NY through R2G Binghamton. To date, nearly 300 Cornell students have been an integral part of the R2G partnership emphasizing relational reciprocity, reflection and the balancing of academic learning and community outcomes.

R2G has grown from one college and department (landscape architecture) to encompass a much larger academic geography and is now part of the Community and Regional Development Institute in Development Sociology. This is a testament to how R2G has become a meeting ground helping to transcend knowledge divides and gained campus-wide recognition. Cornell believes R2G exemplifies its mission of public engagement and land-grant commitment to NY State. It nominated R2G for the 2018 W. K. Kellogg Foundation and C. Peter Magrath Community Engagement Scholarship Awards for which R2G received honorable recognition. Engaged Cornell is now supporting a R2G Collaborative Evaluation Project researching R2G’s has impact on students and on the Utica and Binghamton communities.

Future Goals
Enrolling and encouraging new university partners (students and faculty), courses and research projects to work with R2G Utica and build the ‘next generation’ of community development and engagement initiatives on the foundation of infrastructure–social capital, networks, relationships, placemaking projects, etc.–produced by and resulting from the first decade of R2G Utica’s existence. Expanding university-community collaborations beyond Cornell to include other Upstate NY universities and colleges. Completing and disseminating findings of the R2G Collaborative Evaluation Project to diverse audiences.



Fostering Service for Music Learning as Youth Development

Baltimore

UMBC’s music department, its service learning center (The Shriver Center), the Baltimore Symphony’s OrchKids program and a Baltimore City public middle school collaborate to create a community service learning project that supports through collaboration the growth and development of UMBC music education students, Baltimore City middle school students, UMBC faculty, public school teachers, OrchKids staff, and community members.

Goals

The goals are to support UMBC music education students in fostering values for service-based community work, developing skills and enthusiasm for teaching in Baltimore City, promoting equitable and inclusive approaches that support youth development through music, consistently contribute to the development of young people, and develop a deep community partnership.

Service Learning & Community Engagement Pedagogy

Students visit the Baltimore Middle School/ OrchKids service learning site most weeks throughout 4 semesters. At the end of their 90-minutes with students, the group of UMBC students reflects together with a campus faculty member and the primary site music teacher. Discussions center around examining challenges and issues of teaching and learning, and identifying and developing approaches that successfully support youth development within this context. Collaborative reflection sessions enable students to problem solve together and develop both philosophical approaches and practical skills for supporting the development of the young people with whom they work. Discussions also occur during the 90-minute class time with the middle school students, which allows UMBC students to better understand the middle school students’ perspectives and interests. UMBC students make connections with their campus courses and else develop new ideas that can be applied as future citizens, community members, educators, and musicians. Students learn first hand the ways that educators involved with the program are meaningfully engaging with parents and community members beyond the classroom, through a wide range of personal interactions, community performances, and discussions.

Student/Participant Experience

Perhaps most importantly, this service learning experience provides a forum for students to develop values for service. Teaching by definition is a service-based profession; it is essential that young teachers walk into the classroom thinking about students first. Further, the program aims to help students to develop values for the ways that music can support youth development, including young people’s social, emotional, intellectual, and artistic capacities. The Baltimore City music program is designed with these aims in mind. That is not necessarily the case for the average music classroom in the U.S. Many are instead designed to prioritize music content, and in many cases music content focuses on Western classical music, which does not reflect a far broader range of music that may be of interest to young people and potentially better support their development. Students reflect on how the traditions of a more narrow focus of music, which many students experienced firsthand in their own education, may create inequities in their classroom. They contrast principles of Music Learning as Youth Development (2019) with those approaches and identify potential differences in contributions to young people and their communities. The most important part of UMBC students’ experiences is the relationships they build with the young people with whom they work for two years. This is a significant contrast from most education programs who may have one semester or



maybe one year experiences at a single site. Students really get to know the kids and the community and build a deep understanding for how music can play a meaningful role in their lives. Students leave understanding many values, opportunities, and challenges of teaching within this Baltimore City context.

Community Experience

This project builds capacity in the community by supporting the education and development of young people in the community. It also supports the development of future educators who may choose to work in Baltimore City. It connects our music department, service learning center, the Baltimore Symphony OrchKids program, and a Baltimore City public schools through a deep collaboration. Knowledge is exchanged when UMBC students are at the middle school, during performances in Baltimore City, as well as during the few trips that middle school students have taken to campus to perform and interact with our community.

Faculty/Staff Experience

This project has enabled me as a faculty member to understand more about the many strengths, resources, and opportunities for music learning to contribute to youth development. The middle school students at this site are an inspiration and have supported my learning about how within this community music learning can best contribute to supporting the development of young people. This in turn translates to my teaching on campus. I also oversee the music education program, so I have also been able to influence the curricula in courses taught by other instructors in response to my learning. The experience has also provided me deeper insight into many challenges and inequities that exist within Baltimore City Public Schools. It is my hope that having UMBC music education being a part of this program will lead to having some of them being prepared and choosing to teach in the city. There is a consistent need in Baltimore for high-quality educators who are passionate about working with the city’s students and understand practices that can best support their learning. Further, we have facilitated a number of opportunities for middle school students to come to campus, in part, to help them learn more about the college experience and promote higher education as a valuable goal to pursue.

Institutional Priority

As our website states “UMBC is a dynamic public research university integrating teaching, research and service to benefit the citizens of Maryland.” A commitment and value for “community service and leadership” is highlighted, and the institution backs that up with research, programming, and funding. For example, UMBC’s Shriver Center, a center for service learning, “enables students to connect theory to practice and thought to action, bringing their experience back to the classroom, and is UMBC’s primary structured vehicle for producing socially engaged citizens who graduate with the commitment and experience to contribute responsibly in their communities, the State and the Nation.” This project, which is a collaboration between UMBC’s music department, the Shriver Center, and the Baltimore City music program, enables the university to directly support the education of young people in Baltimore City while also fostering values of civic engagement among UMBC students.

Future Goals

- 1) We wish to expand the number of UMBC and Baltimore City students with whom we are working; our immediate next step is a pilot program has launched this semester at a Baltimore City high school UMBC’s vocal music education majors
- 2) We wish to pursue funding that would able UMBC to expand its music education program, in collaboration with Baltimore City community members, in ways that further fosters and embodies music learning as youth development