

# The CommUniversity Initiative

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## Motivation

The aim of the CommUniversity Initiative is to create a framework that will support any faculty member interested in adapting their course into a community engaged learning opportunity, incorporating Pitt students and community residents as peer learners in the classroom.

## Project Description

The CommUniversity Initiative will work with a transdisciplinary team of faculty, staff, and residents to develop a clear framework to support the expansion of these courses to any interested faculty member. This initiative will work specifically to:

- Create a typology of CommUniversity course options, a menu of approaches to resident participation
- Establish a standard of instructional approaches and learning outcomes for all participants
- Identify and address barriers to implementation
- Deliver new and enhanced CommUniversity courses through our Community Engagement Centers (CEC)

## Context

CommUniversity courses have been offered at Pitt's Community Engagement Center (CEC) in the Hill District since 2020. The process of both learning best practices and applying them to the unique community context will engage a cohort of Pitt faculty paired with community members to develop their courses with the support of the Center for Teaching and Learning.

# CommUniversity structures the best practice of community engagement and pedagogical approaches



## Project Deliverables

The measurable outcomes of the proposed 1-year pilot of the CommUniversity initiative are intended to gather a clear understanding of the best approaches to delivering community-engaged learning opportunities and to demonstrate that its intended impact on faculty, students, and communities is realized.

Anticipated outcomes for the project are:

- New and strengthened relationships among Pitt faculty, staff, students, and community members
- Faculty, students, and community members engaged in learning and applying best practices in community-engaged learning
- Implementation of high-quality learning opportunities that are responsive to community goals

## Potential Impact

By convening a transdisciplinary team of faculty, staff, and residents, we can lead both institutionally, and nationally in expanding access to the world class learning opportunities available at Pitt. through:

- Number of courses implemented in pilot year
- Pitt student reflections on their experience and growth as participants in CommUniversity courses
- Community member reflections on their experience and growth as participants in CommUniversity courses
- Instructor OMETs and reflection on their experience and growth as participants in CommUniversity courses

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