A Community-Academic Partnership Linking the Family Planning Council of Southeastern Pennsylvania & Drexel University's School of Public Health (1996 - present)

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Health Disparities Service-Learning Collaborative Grantee Meeting

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Integrated Public Health Curriculum

- Human rights and social justice framework
- Interdisciplinary learning
- Problem-Based Learning (PBL) pedagogy
- Service-Learning ethos
- Applied orientation
What is Problem-Based Learning (PBL)?

- Inquiry-driven instructional method
- Critical thinking
- Synthesis
- Problem-solving skills
- Concepts applied to ‘real world’
- Team work & communication are critical
Drexel’s SPH Community-Based Learning

- Community partners suggest projects
- Shared decision-making
- Structured action & reflection
- Delivery of concrete product(s) to partners
- Evaluation
Preparation for Immersion in the Community (1st Year)

- Public health & human rights
- Health disparities as social injustice
- Empowerment & engagement
- Community-Based Participatory Research
- Resource sessions
1st Year Practicum (120 Hours)

- Supervised, hands-on experience
- Concepts applied to specific need
- Professional activities enhanced
- Poster exhibit
- Evaluation
Universal Competencies (1st Year)

- Self-awareness
- Self-directed learning
- Communication
- Team work
- Capacity working in/with communities
Community-Based Master's Project
(2\textsuperscript{nd} Year/480 Hours)

- Learner-driven skill development
- Partner-identified focus
- Meets partners’ objectives/interests
- Manuscript development
- Poster session
- Supervision and evaluation
Universal Competencies (2\textsuperscript{nd} Year)

- Concepts applied to community needs
- Appreciation for depth & breadth
- Role of learning objectives
- Sensitivity to community needs
- Different products to different audiences
What is Learned?

- Engagement in lives of real people
- Interest in/value of learning as a process
- Interest in/value of context
- Complexity of issues
- Increasing understanding & curiosity
- Increasing motivation to learn
- Capacity for more complex understanding
What is the Family Planning Council?

- Private, not-for-profit
- Focus on policy & planning
- Governed by Board of Directors
- Supports reproductive health services
- Links with 26 agencies & 84 clinics
- Serves 145,000 clients annually
Partnership with Drexel School of Public Health

- Student placement site since 1997
- Submission of grant applications
- Guest lecturers & adjunct faculty
- Drexel faculty sit on Board
Benefits of Partnerships for Students

- Living experience in Public Health
  - Direct Service
  - Leadership
  - Policy
  - Coalition building
  - Relationship management
  - Advocacy
  - Role models
  - Career opportunities
Benefits of Partnership
Family Planning Council

- Assets to complete projects
- Staff & Board Development
- Mentorship roles
- Planning & evaluation
- Evidence-based approaches
- Teaching opportunities
- Access to library resources
Benefits of Partnership
Drexel School of Public Health

- Assets to complete projects
- Ties & access to the community
- Experienced adjunct faculty
- Collaborate on cutting edge & timely issues (e.g. HPV vaccine, expanded Medicaid coverage)
Successes Reported by Adjunct Faculty

- Enhance learning with public health experience
- Technology transfer to work setting to complete projects
- Ongoing relationships that facilitate employment opportunities for students
Challenges Faced by Adjunct Faculty

- Lack of knowledge of Drexel University’s system
- Competing priorities
- Limited presence on campus
- Scheduling challenges
Challenges Faced by Community Partners

- Space
- Tools
- Identifying multiple preceptors to accommodate multiple students
Challenges for Preceptors

- Underestimated time commitment
- Competing priorities
- Lack of contact with Drexel faculty advisors
- Conflicting IRB requirements
- Administrative paperwork
- Differing timelines
Challenges for Preceptors (cont’d)

- Limiting beliefs of FPC Staff
  - Apprehensive about working with individuals with advanced degrees
  - More comfortable working with qualitative vs. quantitative projects
  - Struggles with students’ idealism (textbook vs. reality)
Successes Reported by Community Partners

- Preceptors pleased to serve as mentors to students
- High quality outcomes derived from student projects
- Drexel University’s expanded orientation to Service-Learning
Keys to Partnership

- Commitment to Public Health
- Trust
- Respect
- Equality
- Reciprocity