Students expect their CEL placements to provide them with opportunities to “marry” theory and practice. From Business, Law, Biological Sciences, Arts, and Human Ecology, students have experience in co-op, practicum, and service-learning placements discussed CEL expectations and negotiating community and university CEL expectations.

**FINDINGS**

**I. Student Perspectives on CEL - Placement Expectations**

A Safe Environment to Learn Skills and Challenge Themselves

- Students expected to acquire management skills, exercise leadership skills, and be given responsibility.
- Students considered their placement to be a safe environment where they could take risks, challenge themselves, and try new things.

Opportunity to Put Classroom Learning into Practice

- Students expected their placement to be a place where they could test learned skills and abilities in a professional setting.
- Experiences in the real world meant students could attach faces and stories to the theories learned in the classroom, thus fully develop their understanding of a topic.

Exposure to Multiple Perspectives

- Students expected to get a variety of perspectives on how others view their expertise and areas of interest.
- Students recommended being open to new experiences and learning from mentors and the people one will meet in a community placement.

An Involved Community Supervisor

- Students expected their placement supervisor to provide an orientation of the organization and the tasks expected of them, provide on-going supervision, and highlight the significance of their work/duties.

**II. Community Partner Perspectives on CEL Partnerships**

Community partners appreciated being able to negotiate the length of CEL placements based on their organization’s needs. Key characteristics of CEL partnerships were grouped into three areas: placement, student, and university partner perspectives. FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS

**DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Students expect their CEL placements to provide them with opportunities to “marry” theory and practice (Raull & Hollander, 2006; Ralph et al., 2008), develop and test new skills, and build relationships with community partners and university staff (Sandy & Holland, 2006).
- Through CEL partnerships community partners expect to mentor motivated students, have ongoing conversations with university partners (Leiderman et al., 2002), and share mutually beneficial outcomes with both students and university partners (Cone & Payne, 2002).
- Universities need to have structures for students to (a) share past CEL experiences with other students and prepare for CEL placements; (b) have mutually beneficial conversations with community partners; (c) negotiate with university partners; and (d) receive mentoring and support from university and community partners.
- Universities need to have structures for community partners to (a) have ongoing conversations with university partners and provide feedback; (b) share what they have learned about making student engagement work; and (c) negotiate CEL placement time lines.

**REFERENCES**


