APU Community Engagement Committee: Principles of Community Engagement

APU *community engagement* is demonstrated through the cooperative and collaborative partnership between university administration, faculty, staff, and students with local, regional, national, and international communities for the sharing of knowledge and resources in the context of mutuality and reciprocity. APU's engagement strategies reflect our Christian ethos and aim to equip students, faculty, and staff to responsibly and respectfully engage diverse communities.

About These Principles

The Principles of Community Engagement are based on researched best practices and guide our work with students, faculty, staff, and community partners to inform program design, implementation, and evaluation before, during, and after community engagement. Questions related to each principle may be used to facilitate discussion, identify areas of responsibility, and engage in critical reflection related to work with the community. The principles are aspirational. Ethical and effective community engagement involves intentional elements of preparation and ongoing participant development.

General assumptions regarding the document's language:

- The principles are not listed in priority order and should be equally valued.
- Although the principles are applicable to all parties involved in an activity, the language is primarily focused on student-focused community engagement experiences.
- The principles are intended to guide action, however, individual context warrants flexibility and adaptability in how they are applied.
- Defining aspects of the principles and questions to consider have been assigned to a primary category but may be relevant to other categories.

Community Engagement at APU is …	Questions to Consider
1. A Reflection of our Christian Ethos, as evidenced by…	
A. faith-integrated preparation & reflection B. intercultural competence development C. Christ-centered philosophy & approach D. civic-minded development E. foundations in biblical principles	1. What do the Christian Scriptures say about community engagement? How does a Christian worldview inform the purpose and means of community engagement? 2. What assumptions, ideas or beliefs are held about this community? Is an openness encouraged to having those assumptions challenged to learn from others? 3. What preparation is needed for humble and respectful service experiences? 4. What does cultural competence and Christ-like humility look like in the engagement context? How will this be demonstrated? 5. How have students' beliefs, values, and knowledge shifted as a result of participation in the engagement experience?

2. Purposeful & Goal Oriented, as evidenced by…	
A. participant reported impact & action B. clear goals & measured outcomes C. critical reflection as an outcome D. intentional design, including holistic preparation, activity, and post-experience integration and reflection E. personal and professional development	1. What are the goals for the engagement for all parties involved? 2. What metrics will be used to measure the impact of the engagement? 3. How will all involved (including community partners) know whether the engagement outcomes have been achieved? 4. What aspects of impact might be difficult to measure? 5. How will those participating in the engagement activities be held accountable for their actions and commitments?
3. Cooperative & Collaborative, as evidenced by…	
A. careful planning & preparation B. community responsiveness C. flexible & adaptable participants D. sharing of knowledge & resources E. open communication	1. What skills and knowledge are needed to be effective in mutual engagement with this community and/or societal issue? 2. What resources are available that might deepen understanding of the context surrounding the engagement initiative? 3. How are the community partner's needs, assets, expectations, and interests determined? 4. How will clear lines of ongoing communication with the community partner(s) be established? 5. How has the academic work prepared students for the experience?
4. Mutual & Reciprocal, as evidenced by…	
A. inclusion of asset-based perspectives B. equitable & mutual relationships C. student involvement in experiential learning D. deepened understanding of each other E. co-created projects & partnerships	1. What does reciprocity look like between the community partner(s) and the university? 2. What experience and knowledge do the community partner(s) have that will contribute to student learning? 3. How can the engagement activities be tailored to the community partner's stated needs, assets, and interests? 4. How will it be ensured that student learning or university benefit does not come at the expense of the community? 5. How is power distributed in this endeavor? Which way do money/resources flow in this project and how might that limit communication, equity or partnership?
5. Responsible & Respectful, as evidenced by…	
A. diverse partnerships B. continuity - short & long term implications C. plans for sustainability D. ensuring safe practices E. intentional design for accessibility for all populations	1. What differences and similarities exist among the people involved in the engagement experience? 2. How can differences be recognized and respected as valuable assets? 3. What steps have been taken to ensure physical and emotional well-being, as well as to respect the confidentiality and privacy of all participants? 4. How will trust be earned and sustained with the community partners and those serving together? 5. What long-term or ongoing plans have been made to sustain the partnership?