

National Study of Community Development (CD) Higher Education Faculty Survey

The Facts:

The average study participant was a middle-aged white male with a Ph.D. Most survey respondents taught CD courses at least once a year. Sixty percent (60%) of the courses taught are graduate-level courses (see pie chart to the left).



Types of Community

There are many different types of community in today's society. A few definitions...

Community of place: locale; definition based on an identified geographic location

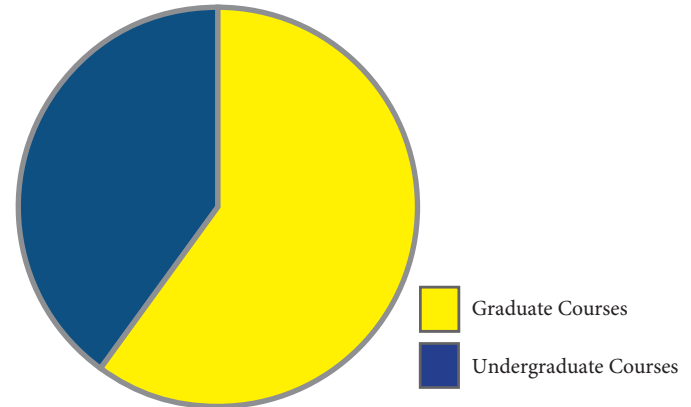
Community of identity: associating with a group due to shared characteristics/traits

Community of practice: engaging with a group due to common areas of work/profession

Community of interest: associating with others due to shared hobbies/interests

According to the study, a majority of CD Educators still define community in the the most traditional sense - as *communities of place*. Sixty-seven percent (67%) of respondents also recognized *communities of identity* in their coursework. Finally, a few more than half of respondents utilized *communities of practice* in their classes. *Communities of interest* were not mentioned.

What do CD Education Professors Teach?



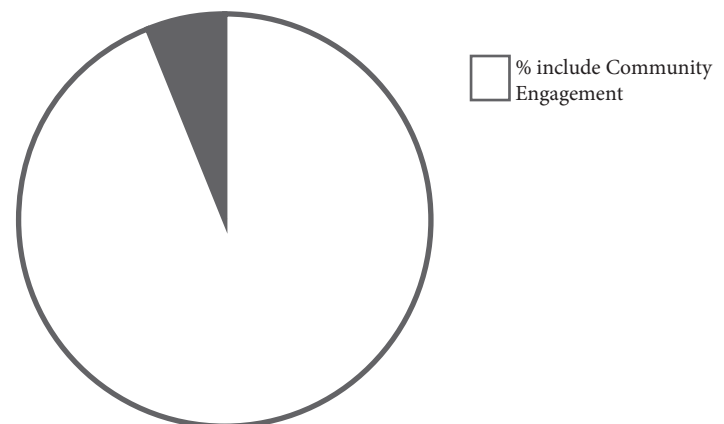
The top three (3) concepts consistently covered in CD Education courses include:

- social justice
- economic development
- civic engagement

Definition of CD

A majority of respondents utilized some definition of *community development* in their teaching. Most CD definitions incorporated five primary concepts: capital/resources, social justice, type of community, process and practice, & being context-specific.

Community Engagement



Overall, most respondents (94%) included a community engagement component within their coursework. Respondents primarily engaged community through community-based projects, collecting community information, & hosting guest speakers.

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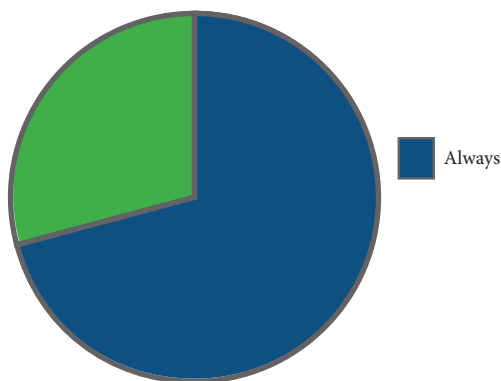
Best Methods for Teaching CD Theory



Respondents indicated the top five methods (in rank order) used to effectively teach community development theory are:

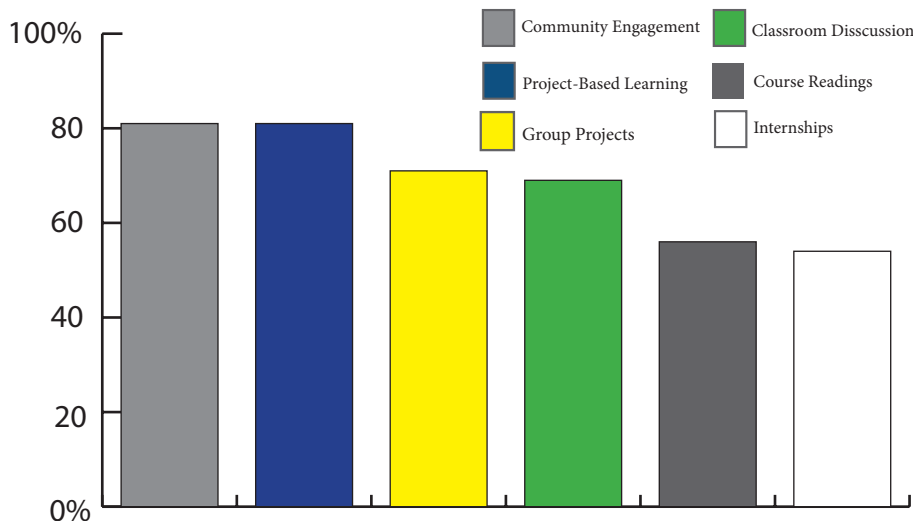
1. Classroom discussion
2. Course readings
3. Community engagement
4. Classroom lecture
5. Project-based learning

Linking Community Development Theory & Practice



In general, 71% of the respondents “always” linked community development theory and practice in their teaching. Specific to undergraduate programs, half of the respondents were making this connection.

Best Methods for Teaching CD Practice



When asked about effective methods for teaching community development practice, 81% of respondents recognized *community engagement* as the best and most effective strategy to teach the practice of community development. However, many other effective methods are utilized by respondents. Other teaching strategies identified as best methods for teaching CD practice include: project-based learning (80%), group projects (71%), classroom discussion (69%), course readings (56%), and internships (54%).*

*Respondents could choose multiple options

Innovative Teaching Practices

Creative or innovative teaching practices identified by the respondents fell into three themes:

- *pedagogical approaches*
- *methods of research and analysis*
- *forms of community engagement*

The top *practices* within these categories included experiential learning & design, community analysis, and community partnerships.

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Top Learning Outcomes in CD Education

According to respondents, the most important concepts they wanted to impart to students through their CD courses were:

- Critical thinking
- Community engagement
- Complex problem solving
- Participatory methods
- Evaluation

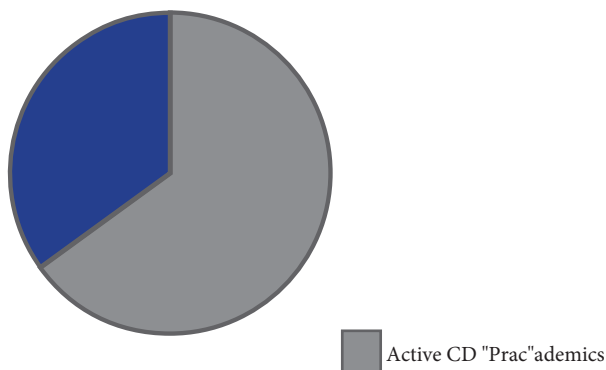


Top Challenges in CD Education

Respondents broadly identified the top challenges in community development education as:

- *Science content* - a common and consistent set of theories related to conceptual or theoretical needs in community development education;
- *Resources for the discipline* - including the availability of financial, academic, & administrative resources;
- *Community engagement* - the process of incorporating community engagement into community development coursework; and
- *Community development philosophy* - the ideas underpinning community development education.

"Prac"-ademics



Overall, two-thirds (65%) of the respondents considered themselves to be "**prac-ademics**" - instructors who are also active community development practitioners. A majority spend about 25% of their professional time in community-based practice.

**This contrasts data from programmatic leaders within the programmatic study.*

Promising New Directions

The top promising new directions in community development education identified by respondents were classified under five broad themes:

- *changing context of the field,*
- *community engagement,*
- *new paradigms or technologies for teaching,*
- *community development philosophy*
- *resources for the discipline.*