

CCEL began in 2000 as The Center for Community Engagement & Learning with a committed “Dream Team” of faculty & community partners.

Today CCEL serves as a central locus for the intersection of student learning, faculty research, and community engagement.

Our Vision:

To Be a Catalyst and Connector for an Engaged University.

Our Mission and Purpose:

To connect academic programs with community needs through the use of scholarship and action for the mutual benefit of the University and the State, its communities, and its diverse peoples.



Since 2006, UAA has been recognized by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as a “Community Engaged Institution.”

Carnegie defines community engagement:

The collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

UAA’s Carnegie application for 2015 states:

UAA looks forward to the next five years and the transformation that will be realized out of completing this work . . . Implementing the kinds of changes that will keep on transforming who we are with our communities.

Strategic Priority #1

Develop and support faculty and students in the pedagogy and practice of community engagement and learning.

- ⇒ Increase community-engaged faculty in teaching, creative activity and research.
- ⇒ Provide faculty training and development in pedagogy of community engagement.
- ⇒ Deliver quality educational and leadership opportunities for engaged students.
- ⇒ Connect opportunities for engaged scholarship, publications and conferences.
- ⇒ Create interdisciplinary connections for public dialogue.



Faculty Bring a High Impact Practice to the Classroom

Service learning enabled me as a teacher to transition with students from ‘the world’s problems are too many and depressing’ to ‘the world’s problems are solvable!’

~ Dorn Van Dommelen, Professor, Geography & International Studies

Students feel like they are working on a real problem. . . Something community is concerned about. I’ve noticed that their technical skills are improved beyond what they were in the lab.

~ Frank von Hippel, Professor, Biological Sciences

Strategic Priority #2

Provide leadership for effective community engagement, outreach and partnerships at UAA.

- ⇒ Develop network of faculty affiliates to serve as advisors and ambassadors.
- ⇒ Build upon Carnegie designation for 2015 with a network of national peer institutions.
- ⇒ Provide guidance to faculty for promotion and tenure with engaged scholarship.
- ⇒ Increase UAA’s capacity to measure and report on community engagement.
- ⇒ Publicize / disseminate stories of partnership and engagement.



Students Become Leaders in Civic & Community Engagement

Overall, this experience taught me a lot about my prejudices and myself. I am proud that I was able to step out of my comfort zone to participate in something that is really worthwhile.

~ Student reflection

We have addressed problems I didn’t even know existed and then facilitating a sort of in-class discussion about different methods to solve them is very helpful and useful . . . I feel as though I’m not only obligated to be involved but that I want to get involved and make a difference.

~ Student reflection

Strategic Priority #3

Be a catalyst, convener and connector to address community issues & engage UAA for the future of Anchorage and Alaska.

- ⇒ Be a host for special community engaged initiatives.
- ⇒ Develop opportunities for service learning with reciprocal partnerships.
- ⇒ Feature events and conferences to bring community together in public dialogue.
- ⇒ Promote *Community-Campus Connections* as a web-based portal.
- ⇒ Connect with community for collaborative research within Anchorage & Alaska.



CCEL Brings Community & University together

- *Monthly **Think Tanks** showcase non-profit organizations with questions to answer together as a community.*
- ***Dialogues for Public Life** trains UAA & community members to address critical issues in civil dialogue.*
- ***ENGAGE UAA** schedules activities for civic and community engagement.*
- ***Urban in Alaska** provides an umbrella for events throughout the year focused on our urban issues in Anchorage.*
- ***ENGAGE Student Liaisons** is a program for students interested in being civic leaders.*