Center for Experiential Learning Mission

Advancing Loyola’s Jesuit Catholic mission of “expanding knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice, and faith,” the Center for Experiential Learning is an undergraduate curriculum center that collaborates with community, staff, and faculty partners as co-educators, to coordinate, develop, support, and implement academic experiential learning for students.

Several years ago, while visiting Loyola students at the UCA in El Salvador, I found myself sitting across from Fr. Dean Brackley, S.J. After he asked about my work at Loyola, I explained I am the Director of Experiential Learning and his eyes lit up: “That is very important work – it is at the heart of a Jesuit education.” I am reminded of his famous words quoted below challenging us to “walk with” others in life and accompany them in solidarity. His challenge for higher education to connect students to the social reality – “to understand the real world” – remains: “Catholic education should help students discover their vocation in life – above all, their vocation to love and serve.” (Higher Standards, 2006).

Just as the ‘L’ connects the city of Chicago, the work of the Center for Experiential Learning contributes to this goal of higher education by serving as a “connector.” Connecting students to experiential learning courses and opportunities in the community, connecting faculty to new ways of teaching through engaged learning, connecting community-based organizations to capacity development through partnership opportunities with Loyola—all of these connections are demonstrated in this annual report. Through engaging in undergraduate research, service-learning, academic internships and learning portfolios, students listen, let their hearts be broken, fall in love, and get ruined for life in the reality of their learning.

The impact is clear: Loyola students learn more deeply, faculty engage differently, and community partners become co-educators. As the work of Center for Experiential Learning continues to deepen at Loyola University Chicago, students connect their learning to new ideas grounded in reality—a richer understanding of social justice, new knowledge, well-developed skills, and community-centered values “to love and serve.”

In service,

Patrick M. Green, Ed.D.
Director, Center for Experiential Learning
Clinical Instructor of Experiential Learning

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Have the courage to listen.
Have the courage to receive.
Have the courage to let your heart be broken.
Have the courage to feel.
Have the courage to fall in love.
Have the courage to get ruined for life.

Fr. Dean Brackley, S.J.
Service-Learning at Loyola University Chicago is a credit-bearing academic experience that invites students into our surrounding communities in ways that stimulate their academic, civic, social, vocational, moral, ethical, and spiritual growth and development while they contribute to the common good. Each semester approximately 50 faculty members at Loyola facilitate service-learning experiences with their students.

Exploring and connecting faith and service is important work for students at Loyola and is one example of how our students connect course content with community experience. Through the Faith and Service Initiative, Theology students examine faith narratives through history while participating in the ongoing stories of congregations and their members through service-learning. Students observe diverse forms of worship in congregations in Loyola’s neighboring communities, meet with clergy and lay leaders to better understand the connections between faith and service, and participate in the service and ministry work of the congregation in shelters, soup kitchens, and clothing centers and with senior citizens, neighborhood children, and youth. Students seek to make and understand connections between their own faith and engagement in the world.

Service-learning is making powerful connections for Loyola students and, we believe, making an important contribution to the common good.
Academic internships foster experiential learning that integrates knowledge and theory learned in the classroom with practical application and skill development in a professional setting. Students receiving academic credit for internships enroll in a course led by a faculty instructor, and with community partners as co-educators, students “learn by doing” in real world professional experiences and reflect upon their learning in the coursework.

After receiving an offer to become an intern at PAWS Chicago, a no-kill animal shelter, Lauren Rogers (History ’16) enrolled in an academic internship course. Lauren was asked to reflect on her internship experiences at PAWS through readings, class discussion, and reflective assignments with themes around leadership, organization theory, and civic professionalism:

“It is so easy to get caught up in school, work, etc. and not think about the significance of one’s impact on the community. Coming to a place like PAWS where the animals depend on your work for a meaningful life is a huge eye opener and helped me to become more humble, compassionate and understanding. … PAWS has changed me more than I have changed it. I have become a more determined leader and a more passionate individual. I have found purpose in my life that I never knew existed. I have developed an importance of civic duty not only to the Chicago community, but also to the world.”

As a History major with minors in Journalism and International Studies, Lauren explored how her internship experiences connected with her academic studies. In Spring 2015, after consulting with her Faculty Mentor, Dr. Elliott Gom, Lauren was awarded a Loyola Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program Provost Fellowship to research dog fighting and abuse in Chicago, an issue she became more interested in during her internship at PAWS Chicago.

“Research is something I never thought about before PAWS. I thought it was for scientists or chemists, certainly not 20-year-old girls majoring in History. However with the help of my professor and Loyola’s Undergraduate Research program, a whole new world has been opened to me.”

“I am more myself now than I was before and I owe that all to PAWS and this course. When everyone says that you find yourself through the service of others, I suppose they really do know what they are talking about… I am a more passionate and dedicated individual than I ever was before, and now I finally have direction in my life.”

LAUREN ROGERS, HISTORY ’16
In The Loyola Experience: A Four-Year Plan for Student Transformation, students have the opportunity to achieve milestones and participate in "key experiences" during their four years at Loyola University Chicago. The Center for Experiential learning facilitated the Year 3 Engagement Key, focusing on the integration of a student’s engaged learning course and co-curricular leadership experience through the creation of an ePortfolio. Students earn an actual key embossed with “Engagement” and the Loyola logo.

3,439 learning portfolios created by students through academic and co-curricular courses/programs to facilitate intentional learning, reflection, assessment, and professional development

3,296 learning portfolios created by students outside of a course or program requirement

29,283 academic artifacts* uploaded to course or program-based ePortfolios

*An artifact is a piece of evidence included in an ePortfolio that demonstrates skills, abilities, values, competencies, or knowledge.

“Developing an ePortfolio is a way to reflect upon one's experience, articulate the takeaways from the experience, and develop a new action plan for engaging the world in a more responsible and just way … ePortfolios are meant to be shared. Sharing one’s experiences of social justice and service through an ePortfolio inspires others to think about their role in the structures of society.” JUSTIN HOCH, THEOLOGY ’15

Visit Justin’s ePortfolio at: HTTP://JUSTINHOCH.INFO

In The Loyola Experience: 50 students earned the Year 3 Engagement Key this year.

The ePortfolio Peer Mentor team served over 4,000 students and 150 classes, and won the Ignatian Spirit Award, given to a group of student employees who exemplify qualities of teamwork and show commitment to the Jesuit ideals.

CONNECTING KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND VALUES

An ePortfolio (electronic portfolio) allows Loyola students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and values through a digital collection of their work. Loyola students begin building a learning portfolio in their first year seminar course, and continue documenting their learning and reflecting on their Loyola experience. Students’ work culminates in a professional portfolio.
Mutually beneficial relationships lie at the heart of the work of the Center for Experiential Learning, and relationships with community partners form the backbone of Loyola student learning off-campus. Students are able to expand their learning beyond the classroom through meaningful interactions with organizational staff and clients, highlighting the fact that everyone is both teacher and learner. As students help build capacity of our partner organizations, they have the opportunity to apply their learning to real-world situations and connect it to the lived experiences of their neighbors.

“Out of all of the college volunteers we have, I always feel like the students from Loyola are here because of their mission-driven passion to serve others. This is an enormous, intangible benefit to the work we do.”

“The Loyola students we’ve had here in the past year show strong dedication and conscientiousness which results in higher morale and output for our organization”

“Seeing our younger generation volunteer their time to the organization is inspirational!”

“96% of community partners indicated that Loyola students contributed to the building of organizational capacity, such as expanding volunteer pools and developing or expanding services and programs.”

700+ organizations hosted Loyola students for academic internships and service-learning placements.

96% of community partners had regular conversations with students about their learning.

93% of community partners are satisfied or very satisfied with the work of Loyola students at their organization.
The Loyola Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (LUROP) includes funded fellowships for mentored research, guides to external research opportunities, travel grants, workshops on research and presentation skills and a symposium to showcase undergraduate research. In an effort to expand Loyola’s efforts in social justice, new LUROP fellowships include the Social Justice Research Fellowship and for 2015-2016 the Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation Fellowship.

**Connecting to Knowledge Creation**

**Number of Fellowships by Program**
- 8 Biology Research Fellowships
- 9 Biology Summer Research Fellowships
- 8 Carbon Undergraduate Research Fellowships
- 10 Carroll and Adelaide Johnson Scholarships
- 3 Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL) Fellowships
- 4 Institute for Environmental Sustainability (IES) Undergraduate Research Fellowships
- 20 McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program
- 1 Molecular & Computational Biology Summer Research Fellowships
- 58 Mulcahy Scholars Fellowship
- 72 Provost Fellowships
- 14 Research Mentoring Program Fellowships
- 3 Ricci Scholarships
- 1 Rudis Fellowships
- 11 Social Justice Research Fellowship
- 4 WISER
- 10 CURL

**112 Total Mentors:**
- 14 Graduate Students
- 98 Faculty

**16 Different LUROP Fellowships**

**38 Majors Represented**

**14 Travel Grants**

**Launched 2 new fellowships:**
- the Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Fellowship
- the Social Entrepreneurship & Social Innovation Fellowship for 2015-2016

“I have developed many valuable skills throughout my fellowships. I gained vast experience in collecting, analyzing, reporting, and presenting research data. Additionally, the working one-on-one and in a group setting with adolescents has fostered my leadership skills. I am confident that my experiences in my research and fellowships will support my endeavors in graduate school.”

**Jori Rappaport (Psychology ’14)**

**The most valuable aspect of the fellowship experience so far has been building relationships with the grad students and learning skills that I will use for the rest of my life as a clinical psychologist.”**

**Melissa Haggerty, Provost Fellowship**
The Center for Experiential Learning organizes the annual Undergraduate Research and Engagement Symposium. Over 300 Loyola students showcased their research and community engagement projects at this event during Loyola’s 2015 Weekend of Excellence. In addition to research posters and oral presentations, students presented their ePortfolios, service-learning projects, and academic internship experiences.

**CONNECTING KNOWLEDGE TO THE COMMUNITY**

“Being able to conduct research with other students, setting up my own projects, and applying learned theories and techniques from lecture in the real world have truly enhanced my understanding of the scientific world in general.”

Samir Martini, Provost Fellowship

“I learned that I want to use my skills in researching and communicating history to inform our current generation on past social justice issues and the individuals or groups who spoke out in the name of change. I am extremely thankful to LUROP for giving me the means to conduct this research extensively and for allowing me to not only become passionate about this era of history but also for helping me in bringing this social justice issue to a wide audience.”

Albert Salatka, Social Justice Research Fellowship
Each year, approximately 60% of Loyola students enrolled in academic internship courses are in service internships – putting in 8-10 hours of volunteer work each week at Chicagoland organizations. While this high impact learning experience is valuable, it can also put extra pressure on many students who have to divide their time across a number of important areas – including their courses, co-curricular activities, volunteering and part-time jobs.

In a signature program made possible through College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), fifteen CAS undergraduates who were enrolled in academic internship courses and demonstrated financial need, received a $1,500 award to recognize their commitment to learning in a service internship.

Laressa McCloy (Psychology ’15) was one of fifteen students to receive a financial award through the Community-Engaged Academic Internship program’s inaugural year. She reflected on her experience in her ePortfolio:

“Being an intern at [Advocate Masonic Illinois Hospital] Pediatric Developmental Center (PDC) and being in the PSYC 390 course has shown me that my passion really is for helping children and confirmed that I want to pursue my career in child psychology and be a child psychologist… I am getting my Masters in Clinical Mental Health Counseling specializing in child and adolescent counseling and after that getting my PhD to become a child psychologist.”

Laressa found class discussion with her professor as well as peers to be invaluable to her experience.

“Being in my engaged learning class taught me a lot. You can go about your day and take for granted what you have done or learned. My engaged learning class did not allow that because reflecting on my experience I have soaked in everything I could and I am eternally grateful for the opportunity I received to take part in this class and my internship at PDC. By participating and giving my services to PDC I have grown and expanded my knowledge.”

Recipient were serving at non-profits and government agencies, including:

- 48th Ward Office Chicago
- Archdiocese of Chicago
- Catholic Charities
- Chicago Police Department
- Cook County Adult Probation Department
- Cook County Juvenile Probation and Court Services Department
- Cornerstone Counseling Center of Chicago
- Deborah’s Place
- LIFT Chicago
- Lincoln Park Chamber of Commerce
- Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital
- Pediatric Developmental Center
- Refugee One
- Seven Generations Ahead
- United States Hispanic Leadership Institute
- Zacharias Sexual Abuse Center

Recipients were enrolled in academic internship courses in:

- Criminal Justice & Criminology
- Environmental Studies
- Health & Human Services
- International Studies
- Political Science
- Psychology

$22,500 DISTRIBUTED

65 APPLICANTS
15 RECIPIENTS
The Social Justice Internship Grant Program is a year-long, paid internship opportunity for Loyola undergraduate students. Through an intensive cohort model, students reflect upon their internship experiences and connect educational, professional, and personal development with issues of social justice and community development. During the 2014-2015 academic year, students engaged at one of two Chicago non-profits: Catholic Charities and Misericordia Heart of Mercy. For 2015-2016, we are excited to add LIFT Chicago to the program!

CONNECTING TO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

When she first started at Madonna House, Social Justice Intern Samy Rivera was anxious about her role. “As a first generation college student and immigrant to this country, I needed to grow personally in my confidence [learning] that I was well-equipped to excel in new situations,” she said.

At Madonna House, a Catholic Charities shelter for women and children, Samy took on a variety of tasks, working with other staff to support the residents’ personal and professional development. Throughout her year as an intern, she learned quite a bit: “At first I felt that I needed to prove my competency by doing everything myself and never asking for help. But as I received feedback, I came to realize that it was not about me or any other individuals on staff standing out. It was about making sure that the people we serve get the most out of it.” In an effort to maximize the benefit of the people she served, Samy complemented her direct service work at the shelter by getting involved with the campaign to increase the minimum wage in Chicago.

While her year with Madonna House is complete, the experience is a continuation of work she’s done on campus and in the community, and she cites collaboration, mentorship, listening to understand, and taking initiative as common themes throughout them all: “A key component that is too often ignored in any learning experience is immense gratitude for all those who guide us along the way. Anything that I have accomplished is a result of the help of others. I see it as my responsibility to pay it forward with every person I meet.”

Visit Samy’s ePortfolio at: HTTP://SAMYRIVERA.INFO

2014-2015 SJI Positions

Misericordia Heart of Mercy
- Developmental Training
- Personal Effectiveness Program
- Recreation and Leisure
- Social Services

Catholic Charities
- Immigration and Naturalization
- Madonna House
- Refugee Resettlement
- Volunteer Relations

“Loyola students are very passionate and well prepared students.”

“The LU students we’ve had brought a sense of mission along with strong professionalism which makes managing and teaching them much easier.”

Number of Loyola students serving as Social Justice interns with Catholic Charities of Chicago and Misericordia Heart of Mercy

$66,798: the total dollar value of the interns’ work
The Center for Experiential Learning supports faculty
in their teaching of engaged learning courses through faculty
development programs, curriculum development consultations,
 experiential learning resources, and connections to community-
based organizations. Some faculty are nominated and selected for
the Experiential Learning Faculty Fellows program, based on their
engagement in experiential pedagogies, and work to enhance and
share their engaged teaching and learning strategies with other
Loyola faculty members.

Stacy Neier, Ph.D., Marketing Instructor,
Quinlan School of Business

“The support of CEL has been instrumental for me
to transform student projects by providing access to
cutting-edge tools and travel to community events.
The fellowship has kickstarted opportunities for
students to be in the field and use tools that industry
professionals are also learning to use. The fellowship
has allowed coursework to be modern and yet still
grounded in our Jesuit tradition of reflection and
action. My teaching and learning has been infused
with a sizable dose of imagination! Together, my
students and I practice curiosity together: because the
enhancements to the coursework can feel like work-in-
progress, we are able to navigate uncertain scenarios
together as an engaged classroom community.”

Stefan Kanzok, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Biology

“The fellowship allowed me to take the students to the annual Midwest Symposium on Neglected
Infectious Diseases (MNID) at Notre Dame University, IN. For most students this is the first time they
are presenting their data to other researchers from the field of infectious diseases, including faculty,
postdocs, and PhD students, from other universities. First and foremost the collaboration with CEL
has widened my horizon about experiential learning beyond the natural sciences. It allows me to
become a better advisor to my students.”

Kyle Roberts, Ph.D., Associate Professor, History

“In my time as a Faculty Fellow I have had the opportunity to meet colleagues across the university
who continually inspire me with their creativity and dedication to engaging students in experiential
learning. The Center cuts across the disciplinary boundaries that often separate faculty at the
university and fosters an environment through its programming that allows for new connections
to be made. I particularly enjoyed the opportunity to work with CEL’s stellar staff. Collaboration
with CEL has given my students crucial resources for doing this work in the spaces where the past
happened and in the repositories that preserve the traces of those people and events. But CEL has
also helped me better understand how to engage students in reflecting on not only the way in
which their own position shapes the way they understand the past, but also how doing the work of
History is changing them in the process.”

Becky Silton, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Psychology

“CEL has greatly supported my students and research mentoring/teaching via providing numerous
funded research grants for undergraduate students. The strong undergraduate research grant
program (LUROP) not only provides fiscal support for students’ research studies, but it also teaches
students how to write grants as well as conceptualize study designs and then carry out many
aspects of a research study. These are critical skills for students who are serious about careers in
research to get exposed to as undergraduate students. My work is improved through having a
community of active and engaged students in my lab. These students ask critical questions and
help motivate research in new directions.”