



CHICAGO STUDIES EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Creating High-Impact Educational Experiences in Chicago and Beyond

Chicago Studies supports faculty and course instructors in integrating a range of **high-impact educational practices** (Kuh, 2008) into their teaching and mentorship of College students. Learn more: chicagostudies.uchicago.edu or contact Chris Skrable, Director of Chicago Studies & Experiential Learning in the College (cskrable@uchicago.edu).

Collaborative Assignments and Projects

Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one's own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Chicago Studies can help instructors design, execute, and assess team-based assignments and cooperative projects, including those that benefit or collaborate with external partners.

Community-Based Learning

In community-based learning, field-based experiences created with or curated by community partners are an integral part of a class' instructional strategy. Community experiences give students direct exposure to issues or topics they are studying in the curriculum. In some classes, they may also connect them with ongoing efforts to analyze and respond to public problems in a way that provides reciprocal benefit to the communities being studied. Chicago Studies can help instructors design and execute community-based learning experiences, including those that benefit or collaborate with external partners.

Diversity/Global Learning

Our increasingly globalized and interconnected society requires the development of intercultural competence. As residents of a world-class city, students have the opportunity to encounter cultures, life experiences, and worldviews very different from their own by engaging with Chicagoans of all walks of life. Chicago Studies can provide connections and microgrants to support instructors in recruiting guest speakers, conducting field trips, and developing and executing projects in collaboration with communities and cultural institutions across the city.

ePortfolios

ePortfolios are websites created by students to document and explain their work for select audiences. This encourages reflection on academic and personal growth across a range of experiences. Chicago Studies can support instructors in implementing ePortfolio pedagogy as part of a project, class, or program. Students completing the interdisciplinary Certificate in Chicago Studies develop an ePortfolio as a program requirement.

Internships

Internships provide students with direct experience in a work setting—usually related to their career interests—and to give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field. Chicago Studies can help instructors identify local internships that relate to course content; develop and fund internships with community partners that extend class learning experiences (especially in conjunction with CBL classes); and design reflective structures to help students articulate learning from internships in the context of their academic field or program.

Learning Communities

Learning communities encourage integration of learning across courses and involve cohorts of students and instructors in asking "big questions" that matter beyond the classroom. Students take two or more linked courses as a group and work closely with one another and with their professors, often exploring a common topic and/or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Chicago Studies provides funding, class development, and logistical support for a faculty-proposed learning community each spring (the Chicago Studies Quarter), and can support the development of similar Chicago-focused experiences with pedagogical expertise and microgrant funding throughout the year.

Theses and Capstone Projects

Culminating experiences such as writing a BA thesis or completing a capstone project require students nearing the end of their College years to create an academic product that integrates and applies what they've learned. Chicago Studies can provide supplemental advising and leverage city-wide connections to support students who wish to complete Chicago-focused projects. Students completing the interdisciplinary Certificate in Chicago Studies develop and execute a capstone project as a program requirement.

Undergraduate Research

Undergraduate research helps students connect key concepts and questions through active involvement in systematic investigation under the guidance of a mentor. Whether course-based or individually directed, engagement with actively contested questions, empirical observation, and cutting-edge technologies cultivates the sense of scholarly excitement that comes from working to answer important questions. In collaboration with the College Center for Research and Fellowships, Chicago Studies supports mentors of Chicago-focused undergraduate research; funds undergraduate research assistantships; sponsors an annual research prize; and publishes *Chicago Studies*, an annual journal of undergraduate research.

Writing-Intensive Courses

Writing-intensive courses encourage communication skills by requiring students to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences in different disciplines. Chicago Studies can support course instructors in designing Chicago-focused writing assignments; offer reflective prompts for maximizing learning from community-based experiences; and provide funding and logistical support for Chicago-area excursions to expose students to sources of inspiration across the city.