COLLEGE UNBOUND

Affinity Group

Community Networks Gathering

Community Engagement & Change Glossary

<u>Organizational Leadership and Change</u>: Your major is about acquiring a depth of knowledge in the area of leadership and change. You will be able to use concepts and methods from the study of leadership, organizations, and change to develop yourself and others, to lead change, and to transform organizations and communities.

- **Community Engagement**: The process of working collaboratively with community members, groups, or organizations to address issues, make decisions, and create positive change. It involves active participation and partnership in decision-making, planning, and implementing initiatives that benefit the community. The goal of community engagement is to build relationships, foster inclusivity, and empower individuals and groups to have a voice in shaping the future of their community.
- **Advocacy:** The act of supporting or arguing for a cause, policy, or group of people. Advocacy can involve raising awareness, lobbying, or taking action to influence change.
- **Affinity Group:** A group of people who share a common interest, goal, or identity. In the context of civic engagement, affinity groups focus on specific areas of social change for example, such as, educational equity or environmental activism.
- **Change:** In the context of community engagement and social justice, change often refers to the transformation of societal conditions, policies, or behaviors to improve outcomes, address injustices, and create a more equitable and just society. This can involve altering laws, cultural norms, or community practices to better serve the needs and rights of all individuals.
- **Call To Action:** A clear and motivating directive that encourages community members to actively participate in efforts that address shared concerns or goals. It invites individuals or groups to take specific actions, such as attending meetings, volunteering, advocating for policy changes, or collaborating on community projects. The purpose of a call to action is to mobilize people toward collective efforts that foster community well-being and drive meaningful, lasting change.
- **Community Organizing:** The process of bringing people together to address common issues and take collective action to create change within a community.
- **Civic Responsibility:** The duties and obligations of citizens to be active, informed, and responsible members of their community, often involving participation in political and social activities.

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- **Social Justice:** The pursuit of fairness and equality in society, especially regarding the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges. It often involves advocating for marginalized or oppressed groups.
- **Grassroots Movement:** A movement driven by the community or the general public, often at the local level, rather than being orchestrated by political or organizational leaders.
- **Intersectionality:** The understanding that social identities (such as race, gender, class, and disability) overlap and intersect, leading to unique experiences of discrimination or privilege.
- **Equity vs. Equality:**
    - **Equality:** Treating everyone the same, regardless of their needs or circumstances.
    - **Equity:** Providing resources and opportunities based on individual needs to ensure fair outcomes for everyone.
- **Empowerment:** The process of giving individuals or communities the tools, resources, and confidence to take control of their lives and advocate for their rights and needs.
- **Public Policy:** The laws, regulations, and actions taken by governments to address issues within society. Civic engagement often involves influencing public policy to bring about change.
- **Activism:** The practice of taking direct action to achieve political or social goals, often through protests, campaigns, or other forms of advocacy.
- **Social Innovation:** The development of new strategies, concepts, or ideas that address social issues and improve the well-being of communities.
- **Civic Participation:** The involvement of citizens in activities that contribute to the governance and betterment of their community, such as voting, volunteering, or attending public meetings.
- **Philanthropy:** The act of donating money, time, or resources to causes or organizations that promote the public good and aim to improve society.
- **Environmental Justice:** A movement that focuses on ensuring that all people, regardless of race or income, have equal access to a healthy environment and are not disproportionately affected by environmental hazards.
- **Coalition Building:** The process of forming alliances between different groups or organizations to achieve a common goal, often involving collaboration across diverse perspectives.
- **Direct Action:** A form of protest or advocacy that involves taking immediate, non-violent action to address an issue, such as sit-ins, strikes, or boycotts.

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- **Voter Suppression:** Efforts to prevent or discourage certain groups of people from voting, often through legal or procedural barriers.
- **Civic Leadership:** The ability to guide and influence others in the community to work towards common goals, often involving skills in communication, organization, and strategic planning.
- **Cultural Competence:** The ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds, is essential for inclusive civic engagement.

Affinity Group

Community Topics:

Justice system:
This group examines how the justice system impacts different communities, particularly marginalized groups, and works to advocate for changes that promote fairness, reduce inequalities, and ensure accountability.

Disability Justice:
The group emphasizes intersectionality, collective liberation, and empowerment, aiming to create a more equitable and just society where all individuals, regardless of their abilities, have full inclusion, equal opportunities, respect, and agency.

Health & Wellness Equity:
This group focuses on the attainment of the highest level of health for all people, ensuring that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. Ensuring that everyone has access to health & wellness-related resources, regardless of their social, economic, or demographic status. This group works together to identify and tackle disparities in health outcomes and promote practices that enhance the health and well-being of marginalized or underserved populations.

To achieve equitable health outcomes and reduce health inequities within the community

Educational Equity:
Dedicated to addressing and promoting fairness and inclusion in education. This community group focuses on ensuring that all students, regardless of their race, socioeconomic status, gender, or abilities, have equal access to quality education and the resources needed to succeed, thrive, and reach their full potential.

Parent / Caregiver Advocacy:
This community group collaborates to share experiences, develop advocacy strategies, and work towards improving systems that impact families. The group aims to amplify the voices of parents and caregivers, promote effective policies, and create supportive networks to enhance the well-being of families within the community.

Community Organizing/ Activism :
Focused on mobilizing and empowering communities to address shared issues, advocate for social change, and improve local conditions. This group works together to strategize, plan, and implement actions that build collective power and foster grassroots engagement. The group emphasizes collaboration, leadership development, and the use

of organizing techniques to address systemic problems, amplify voices, and drive community-led initiatives.
Social innovation : Come together to explore, develop, and support creative solutions to social, environmental, or economic challenges. Through entrepreneurship, new technologies, art engagement, policy reforms, or community-driven initiatives, this group focuses on innovative approaches to solving systemic issues, such as poverty, inequality, climate change, education access, or environmental sustainability. The group provides a collaborative space for participants to share ideas, learn from each other, and take action to implement strategies that promote sustainable and equitable change in society. Social innovations can take the form of new policies, business models, technologies, or grassroots initiatives, and their goal is to create lasting, positive social change while empowering people and communities.
Art & Culture Engagement: Come together to explore and celebrate the role of arts and culture in fostering social connection, personal expression, and community empowerment. This group focuses on how various forms of artistic and cultural expression, such as visual arts, music, dance, theater, and heritage. Engage with social issues, promote dialogue, drive cultural and community change, share experiences, discuss the transformative power of arts and culture, and explore how these mediums can be tools for advocacy, healing, and creating lasting, positive impact.
Philanthropy/Fundraising: Come together to explore and advance the role of giving, resource mobilization, and active participation in driving social impact and community change. This group focuses on how philanthropy—whether through financial donations, volunteering, or leveraging networks—can support causes and organizations that address community needs.