UNCC300 MODULE 1:
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

In UNCC100 you were asked to describe Principles of Catholic Social Thought such as the Common Good, Global Solidarity and Participation, and to analyse the relationship between self and community. Now, in UNCC300, you are being asked to consider how these principles might be lived out in our lives to build a fairer and more compassionate world.

In our interaction with others we need to acknowledge our shared humanity and our shared responsibilities for this planet and others. The skills and talents we all possess are wasted if used only to benefit ourselves. Their truest and most satisfying expression is to be discovered when they are shared. Human flourishing is not simply about economic success or material comfort, nor is it to be discovered simply by satisfying our personal needs and wants. Flourishing depends more on connection than possessions. It is not about individual success but rather successful communities.

In this unit you will continue to develop your understanding of the dignity of the human person within the context of a global community.

As you work through this material keep in mind preparations for your first assignment, where you will need to create an A3 Poster outlining the work of an agency working for global justice (see detailed instructions under the Assessment section of your unit). In particular, be mindful of the place different professions play in the work of these organisations.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Building upon the learning outcomes of UNCC100, upon successful completion of this unit, you should be able to apply knowledge of Catholic Social Thought to:

1. Describe how the efforts of public, private, not-for-profit agencies, faith based groups and you as a professional, can result in the realisation of a more just global community.
2. Critically analyse the challenges with realising aspirations of the common good in your professional community, locally and globally.
3. Critique a global issue where shared responsibility for the common good is not being realised, and propose ways to address this challenge.

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

ACU's Graduate Attributes have a greater emphasis on ethical behaviour and community responsibility than those of many other universities. UNCC300 teaches graduates to be:

GA1: demonstrate respect for the dignity of each individual and for human diversity
GA2: recognise their responsibility to the common good, the environment and society
GA3: apply ethical perspectives in informed decision making
GA4: think critically and reflectively
GA5: demonstrate values, knowledge, skills and attitudes appropriate to the discipline and/or profession
GA6: solve problems in a variety of settings taking local and international perspectives into account
GA7: work both autonomously and collaboratively
GA8: locate, organise, analyse, synthesise and evaluate information
GA9: demonstrate effective communication in oral and written English language and visual media
GA10: utilise information and communication and other relevant technologies effectively
WARNING

Topics considered in UNCC LEO materials and in class discussions may be disturbing for some students.

If you are affected, please contact your Campus Leader and or the University Counselling Service.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are advised that this site may include voices or images of people who have passed away. It may also contain links to sites that may use images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people now deceased.
1.1 PRINCIPLES AND MODELS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1.1.1 WHAT IS COMMUNITY?

Perhaps the place to start is with a discussion about what we mean by community. Watch the following video and consider the different ways we all understand community.

Video source: YouTube (transcript available)

Community can be local or global. Consider the different communities that you could be considered to belong to. We become part of a community in a variety of ways: some we are born into (e.g. country of our birth); some are chosen for us (e.g. primary/secondary school) and there are those we make an active choice to join (e.g. university). Are some more important to your sense of identity than others?

The next video moves us well beyond an understanding of community as our hometown, suburb, state or country. It presents community as something we can seek out and become part of, something we can take responsibility for. It highlights that what joins us together is our common humanity. Once we accept that we can find community anywhere.

Video source: YouTube (closed captions available)

1.1.2 COMMUNITY MIND MAP

Using pens and paper or your preferred software (Mind Map Free and Padlet are free sites you can use), create a mind map showing your connection to different communities. Highlight what it is that those different communities provide you with and what you give to them in return.

In constructing your mind map consider which communities play the greatest part in your life. Of the communities you have identified:

- Which do you most strongly identify with?
- Which do you least identify with? Why?
- In what ways do these communities support you?
- Are there ways in which you support them?
1.1.3 WHAT DO WE MEAN BY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?

"Community engagement, as an expression of our personal mission, leads us to transformation: personal transformation which challenges us to move beyond our comfort zones and allow ourselves to be shaped to become the best human persons we can become, and agents of transformation in and with communities seeking to establish just and more human conditions for people and the whole of creation.

Community engagement calls us into mutual relationships with poor, oppressed and vulnerable communities. It requires that we 'work with' people rather than 'do for' them; that we act collaboratively to make a difference in our world; and that each person in the community remains open to being influenced by the other, and changed."1

1.1.4 ACTIVITY

For your first assignment, you are required to prepare an A3 poster that describes how the efforts of one public, private, not-for-profit agency, or faith based group and you as a professional, can result in the realisation of a more just global community. The first part of the assignment requires you to identify an organisation and provide an overview of the organisation. Specifically, you are asked to:

- Indicate if the organisation is a public, private, not-for-profit agency, and/or a faith based group
- In your own words explain the organisation's mission
- What projects do they focus on?
- Where do they work (i.e. locally and globally)

For this activity, go to the UNICEF website and see if you can answer the questions above. Please note, you cannot use UNICEF for your assignment as we are using it as an example here to help you prepare for your assignment. After you have had a go yourself, view the UNICEF Information Gathering Example to see if you are on track.

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1 IACE Spirituality of Community Engagement (PDF 5.13Mb)
1.2 IDENTITY AND SELF

This unit focuses on the relationship between self and community. The mind map you were just asked to do hopefully helped to make clear the ways in which you are part of many different communities. Perhaps it helped to make clear a level of interdependence we have with so many others. The different communities you belong to all might serve different purposes in your life. Likewise, your level of contribution to these communities is no doubt just as varied. For all of us, there are times when we receive and times when we give a helping hand. The communities we belong to provide much that we need to flourish.

One important aspect of community is that it provides us with a sense of belonging – being part of a community contributes to our sense of who we are. This means that a loss community connection can have long lasting consequences and can be destructive of a person’s sense of self and a barrier to their flourishing.

The communities we belong to often contribute far more to our lives than we realize. For example, it’s easy for most of us to take our connection to family for granted. In the following video Faye Clayton, a member of the Stolen Generation\(^2\), speaks of the impact on her life of being removed from her family and her community.

TELLING OUR STORIES – OUR STOLEN GENERATIONS (FAYE CLAYTON)

Video source: YouTube (transcript available)

"Indigenous children were not only separated from their family but also their community and culture. They were not permitted to use their languages in the missions - a practice continuing until the 1960s in the Kimberley. Contact with family members was at best limited and strictly controlled through censorship and destruction of correspondence." - Sorry Day and the Stolen Generation

Although meeting the needs of others in practical matters is important and necessary, we always need to be aware of the whole person and never see others as defined by their needs or what we may think they lack.

1.2.1 REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Why do you think saying sorry was such a significant action? What is National Sorry Day? Investigate what activities run on your campus on National Sorry Day.

Sorry, Kevin Rudd’s Apology to "The Stolen Generation"

Video source: YouTube (transcript available)

You are encouraged to discover more about The Stolen Generation and the experience of Indigenous Australians and to discover stories that relate directly to your locality.

\(^2\) The Stolen Generation are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were forcibly removed from their families as a result of past Australian government policies, from the late 1800s to the 1970s. The removed children were sent to institutions or adopted to non-Indigenous families. They were separated from their culture, family, land and identity. (Healing Foundation website)
2.1 RETHINKING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT - HUMAN DIGNITY AND THE COMMON GOOD

2.1.1 ACTIVITY

Watch Dominic's Story, part of the Caritas Papua New Guinea Project Compassion 2016:

Video source: YouTube (transcript available)

As you watch this video try to identify what problems are being addressed:

- How are the problems you have identified being addressed?
- What principles of Catholic Social Thought can you identify in this video?
- How does this story demonstrate a contribution to the common good?

2.1.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT ACU

Community engagement at ACU brings the capabilities of staff and students to work collaboratively with community groups and organisations in order to achieve mutually agreed goals. ACU community engagement projects seek to build capacity, improve well-being and produce sustainable outcomes. The aim is to further the interests of both the communities involved and the University. In particular, ACU aims to respond to needs named by partner communities, as a way of promoting positive social change and building a better tomorrow. Success is achieved on both a practical level and through the creation of stronger partnerships between ACU and the partner communities.
2.2 ACU'S CATHOLIC IDENTITY AND MISSION

ACU's Mission and Identity is built upon the principles of Catholic social teaching, which comes from the Pope, Vatican offices, Bishops conferences, and Catholic social thought, which is developed through conversations and reflection in Parishes, schools, universities, families, etc..

Teaching and Catholic Social Thought are built on three pillars: 1) The common good and human flourishing; 2) appreciation of the sacred in life; and 3) ecological integrity. The conceptual pillars try to capture in a nutshell the principles of CST.
2.2.1 BRINGING ACU'S MISSION ALIVE THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Central to ACU's mission is a concern for justice and equity, and the dignity of all human beings. Committed to serving the common good and fostering an appreciation of the sacred in life, ACU works with several local, national and international communities, to create a better tomorrow. Community Engagement offers students and staff a tangible way to put Catholic Social Teaching into practice.

"Respect for each person, appreciation of the sacred in life and commitment to the common good are core values within ACU's community engagement, which draws upon the capacities and scholarship of staff and students in its collaboration with people and communities here and overseas. At the same time, these people and communities enable ACU's students and staff to see the world differently, and to approach their study - particularly their study of the Core Curriculum - from new, well-grounded perspectives."
IACE Annual Report, 2015

Some distinctive characteristics of Community Engagement at ACU:

- Community Engagement at ACU is driven by the ideas found in Catholic Social Thought. Whether it be engagement with the local community through homework programs, or action on a more global scale with universities in East Timor, the underlying principles are the same. All these programs are based on a belief in the dignity of the human person and a desire to promote the Common Good.
- The talents of ACU students and staff are used to play an important role in promoting the interests of those least well off. This approach is informed by a commitment to the principle of the preferential option for the poor.
- When ACU joins with another community in need of assistance, the aim is for it to be a true partnership. There should be respect for the equality of all those involved and an acknowledgment that gifts flow both ways.

Although meeting the needs of others in practical matters is important and necessary, community engagement goes beyond being a service, providing charitable works and fundraising. At ACU, Community Engagement is founded upon:

- Mutuality - reciprocal benefit for both communities, our students and the university. To see someone as simply a recipient of our charity is to limit the possibilities of our relationship with them. It does nothing to redress the imbalance of power that places us in the role of giver and the other in the role of recipient of our charity. True engagement should begin from the position of innate equality that exists in both parties.
- Human flourishing and centrality of respectful relationships - Human flourishing relies as much on building respectful relationships as it does on the provision of our practical daily needs.
- Valuing the environment and the whole of Creation
- Community and belonging
- A commitment to serving the common good
- Spirituality - appreciation of sacredness in life
2.3 EXAMPLES OF ACU ENGAGEMENT

ACTIVITY

The following sections present examples of ACU Engagement. As you watch or read, try to identify what are the positive impacts for the community engagement partner and ACU. For example how might ACU benefit from its engagement with homework support program at Atherton Gardens, and how might the Atherton Gardens Community program benefit from ACU?

2.3.1 HOMEWORK SUPPORT, ATHERTON GARDENS, FITZROY

Video: NAB Schools' First Homework Support, Atherton Gardens, Fitzroy (may require Internet Explorer browser and Flash player plugin to view.)

As you watch, try to identify what are the positive impacts for primary school students, partners and ACU students. How might ACU benefit from its engagement with HSPs?

Impacts:

- improved literacy and numeracy skills for refugee and other children affected by disadvantaged
- building community by including parents, schools and community agencies
- HSPs run on most campuses
- Fitzroy's is the largest HSP in Victoria and involves 120 pre-services teaches and is timetabled into the curriculum. (IACE and School of Education (Vic))
- Underway for 8 years

2.3.2 CLEMENTE AUSTRALIA

Clemente Australia provides tertiary education for Australians affected by multiple disadvantages. The philosophy underpinning the Clemente Australia program is that a Humanities education can enhance social inclusion outcomes and help break the cycle of poverty, homelessness and multiple disadvantage for people who are on the margins of society.

The program is offered with agencies and within community sites that enable people to be socially-supported as they undertake their learning. Read more about Learning Hope: Clemente Australia.

Impact:

- Australians affected by multiple disadvantages participate in Tertiary education as a means of re-engaging with and participating in society
- Education changes lives and communities for the better.
2.3.3 CAPACITY BUILDING IN TIMOR LESTE

Engaging communities in education, health and well-being initiatives and cross-university collaboration:

- Future in Youth – East Timor 2012
- The Timor Foundation: Facts and Figures
- Hooked on Development: Timor-Leste
- Barefoot Nurses: Basic Skills in Medical Aid, Timor-Leste

Impact:

- Rebuilding a nation, community by community
- Engaging with communities to improve health, education and employment opportunities.

These are outstanding examples of what we, as a University, can contribute to building a better tomorrow for the people of East Timor.

2.3.4 ADDITIONAL EXAMPLES OF ACU COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement Stories:

- Health for Happiness: Cambodia
- The Mural Project: Homebush Public School
- FIFA on Board: Ross Smith

Note: Stories are with thanks to ACU's Insight magazine team

Community Engagement Videos:

- Mary Campbell, Staff member speaking about Community Engagement International
- Future in Youth, Timor Leste
- University for Refugees, Thai-Burma border

See more information on ACU's community engagement.
2.4 ACTIVITY

The examples given on the previous page of ACU's Community Engagement provide a starting point for the next activity.

2.4.1 PITCH ACTIVITY

Part of your task for Assignment 1 is to describe how the organisation contributes to the common good (e.g. advocacy, emergency relief, education, etc.). For this activity, choose one of the examples of ACU Community Engagement on the previous page and write a short pitch designed to encourage others to participate in your chosen program, arguing how it contributes to the common good.
3.1 CASE STUDIES - GLOBAL ORGANISATIONS

You should now be familiar with a number of ACU's Community Engagement projects. These projects are real world application of ACU's mission. They allow students and staff unique opportunities to connect and interact with people and communities and to share their talents and experience life from a new perspective.

You should also have an understanding of the rationale behind ACU's Community Engagement projects and be aware of the university's commitment to living out the principles of Catholic Social Thought in particular the commitment to the dignity of the human person and the common good.

ACU's mission to engage with communities is founded in Catholic Social Thought. Other organisations working towards similar goals of promoting social justice and protecting the vulnerable may describe their foundational principles differently. As you work through this next section be mindful of both similarities and differences between how ACU and other organisations express in describing their mission and the underlying principles supporting that mission.

We will now look a little further afield at a number of organisations whose central function is engaging with communities and trying to improve conditions for those most disadvantaged.
3.2 EXAMPLE OF GLOBAL ORGANISATIONS: UNICEF & CARITAS

3.2.1 ACTIVITY

For the final part of assignment 1 (My Professional Contribution), you are asked:

- What skill sets from your profession could contribute the organisations projects?
- What ways can you as a professional contribute to the efforts of the organisation?

The answers to these questions are not always obvious. For this activity, you are asked to watch the videos below on UNICEF & Caritas and contribute to a collaborative mind map on these questions. Add items to the profession categories already in the mind map and create links between them, or add more categories of your own. The links may be between professions i.e. you may see ways that your profession can work with another profession to support the projects.

Note: you can find a link to the Padlet collaborative mind map in the Assessment section of your LEO unit. This mind map is shared by all students on your campus. Please respect the contributions of others when using the collaborative mind map.
3.2.2 UNICEF

UNICEF works for the rights of children around the world. It aims to provide shelter, nutrition, clean water, sanitation and protection from disaster to children who lack these essentials.

BRINGING THE MAGIC OF SCHOOL TO SOUTH SUDAN
Video source: YouTube (transcript available)

DUTCH MOTHER HELPS REFUGEES LANDING IN LESVOS
Video source: YouTube (transcript available)

DAVID BECKHAM’S 10 YEARS AT UNICEF: AN INTERVIEW WITH LORD DAVID PUTTNAM
Video source: YouTube (transcript available)

3.2.3 CARITAS AUSTRALIA

Caritas is involved in long-term development programs in Africa, Asia, East Timor, Latin America, Indigenous Australia and the Pacific. It aims to get people to rediscover their dignity by giving them back control of their lives.

CARITAS AUSTRALIA IN NEPAL
Video source: YouTube (transcript available)
3.3 SMALL-SCALE ENGAGEMENT

This next link is a little different. Both UNICEF and Caritas are large organisations, and looking at the complexity involved in these groups going about their work we might be a little overwhelmed. Few of us have extraordinary skills to offer or the media profile of an international sports star, so we might be reluctant to put up our hand to offer help.

Read this next story about an individual who feels a connection to a worldwide community and has the desire to make a difference even if that difference is on a far smaller scale: Initiative creates toys to reflect children living with disabilities.

3.3.1 ACTIVITY

Identify an issue of global justice or inequality you care about:

- What could you do to help improve the situation either now or when you graduate?
- Is this a situation that you would try to improve as an individual, or would you be likely to assist by teaming up with an organisation working in this field? Why?