

**University of Massachusetts Boston – University of Limerick
Strategic Alliance Joint Seed Funding Program
Report**

Project Title

UL-UMass Boston Strategic Planning Initiative for Civic Engagement¹

Principal Investigators

Prof Maura Adshead, UL Engage, University of Limerick (UL)

Prof. Joan Arches, College of Education and Human Development, University of Massachusetts Boston (UMB)

Prof. Maureen Scully, College of Management, UMB

Ms Bernadette Quillinan, Civic Engagement Champion, UL

Project Participants

Tracey Gleeson, administrative support, UL

Lauren Anderson, administrative support, UMB

Deirdre Murphy, Graduate Assistant, College of Professional and Community Studies, UMB

Chioma Ogechi Nnaji, UMB, PhD candidate, School for Global Inclusion and Social Development, UMB

Cynthia Orellana, Office of Community Partnerships, UMB

Executive Summary (one to two paragraphs – highlight major accomplishments)

This report details significant progress in:

1. the development of parallel graduate programmes with a core civic engagement component providing the necessary common foundations for development of shared programme contents and/or joint programme development in the area of engaged research and practice in both institutions
2. creation of an on-line platform to enable the sharing, developing and co-creation of online resources for engaged teaching, learning and research.
3. the development of parallel practicum modules in Boston and Limerick in the area of youth engagement and active citizenship, so as to enable shared curriculum content and student exchanges
4. development of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme (UROP) in UL for visiting UMB students.
5. Successful research funding to support our current activities and seed corn new research and teaching opportunities being pursued as a result of our joint activities to date.

¹ Changes in the MOA as of January 2016, and staffing in the UMB Office of Community Partnerships resulted in a delay in the original timetable, and slight modifications to the original goals and objectives. Our newly modified collaboration officially began in March, 2016.

Activities / Outcomes

1. Develop a shared/joint Graduate Program in Community Research Plus+ at UL, with connections to existing Masters levels programs and courses at UMB.

UMB efforts to establish an 'Engagement Stream' on existing graduate programmes have been carried out in parallel with UL efforts to draft a new Masters level graduate programme in Community Research plus. In UL, the intention of this programme is to provide an innovative cross-disciplinary and practice based Masters level programme, comprising of a common 'engaged research and practice' core augmented by disciplinary specific academic training and research. Currently two departments have committed to establishing this programme in their own disciplinary fields (MA Community Research and Journalism, Department of Culture and Communication; MA Community Research and Development, Department of Politics and Public Administration). There is further interest in concurrent development from the GEMS structured PhD programme and its Public Patient Involvement (PPI) cluster, and the SSPC structured PhD programme – both of which have engaged dimensions that are under revision.

In UL, the intention is to develop the MA Community Research plus programme in conjunction with other UL graduate level engaged research and training content, in order to deliver genuinely cross-disciplinary graduate level training in engaged research and practice. Discussions with Dr Sarah Hayes, the SSPC Education and Outreach Officer for sharing teaching and module development have made significant progress. In GEMS, whilst the current PPI Ignite proposal to the Health Research Board already attests to significant commitment to engaged training and research with UL Engage, discussions will begin in earnest when the new appointment charged with developing engaged practice and training, John Salzberg, takes up his post in May 2017.

In UMB, the intention is to develop an identified 'civic engagement stream' on existing graduate programmes. To date we have created a Civic Engagement Track, for the Masters in Out-of-School Programs, which can be attached to others programs, in the College of Education and Human Development that includes courses from several existing graduate programs. This civic engagement track will be submitted to University Governance for approval.

Outcome

The UMB 'civic engagement stream' and the UL 'engaged research and practice' core provide comparable academic content and credit to support the convergence of engaged learning outcomes in UMB and UL graduate level programmes, providing the necessary common foundations for development of shared programme contents and/or joint programme development in the area of engaged research and practice in both institutions.

We expect the proposal for a cluster of inter-linked MA Community Research plus programmes to be presented to UL's Academic Programme Review Committee in September 2017. The presence and influence of UMB in the design of this programme ensures opportunities for further connections between UL/UMB graduate programmes.

The figure below summarises the structure of the UL Community Research + programme. Full disciplinary programme outlines are available from the UL APRC online system.

AUTUMN	SPRING	SUMMER
DISCIPLINARY TRAINING 9 ECTS	DISCIPLINARY TRAINING 9 ECTS	LARGE-SCALE STUDENT DIRECTED PIECE OF WORK
DISCIPLINARY TRAINING 9 ECTS	DISCIPLINARY TRAINING 9 ECTS	(DISSERTATION, PORTFOLIO, PROFESSIONAL PROTOCOL)
ENGAGED RESEARCH DESIGN 12 ECTS	ENGAGED RESEARCH DELIVERY 12 ECTS	ENGAGED RESEARCH EVALUATION 6 ECTS

2. Create shared/joint online content for engaged scholarship. Provide an online venue to connect, communicate, collaborate, co-create knowledge, and contribute to the growing body of networks, literature and resources on international community engagement for students, faculty and staff, and community partners.

Content for shared/online engaged scholarship has been developed in parallel by Joan Arches, UMB and the UL Engage team throughout the last year, via our shared communication and collaborations in the identification of cognate interests in existing academic modules in our respective institutions.

Outcome

The UL Engage website has been enhanced to include an ‘Engaged Scholarship’ resources section, including Community Engaged Learning (CEL) and Engaged Research resources pages. UL Engage has devised a common template for UMB/UL Engage co-created resources (see appendix for exemplar) and is currently formatting the content for uploading to the resources.

In the interim, we are sharing, developing and co-creating our online resources in a member-only virtual platform shared between the international network that we have created as part of our other research and teaching activities (see IRC section below).

3. Co-create a UL/UMass Practicum Placement

Both UMB and UL already have existing Practicum modules. Our task therefore has been to develop a convergence of themes and content in order to support a joint Practicum project. In April 2016, Maura Adshead and Bernie Quillinan, UL visited UMB partners in Boston for two days of extensive conversation and planning regarding the potentials for joint collaboration. In addition to work on graduate level programmes (see point 1), we identified an opportunity for collaboration in our respective Practicum modules with a focus on youth participation. Following foundational work on potential projects in Boston and Limerick during the Autumn semester of AY 2016/17; in the Spring Semester 2017 both UMB and UL have developed parallel Practicum modules with a focus on youth engagement: the UMB module on Gun Violence Prevention and Civic Engagement led by Joan Arches, and the UL

Practicum project 'Limerick Be Heard #Youth Engage', led by Maura Adshead (<http://www.ul.ie/engage/node/1641>).

Outcome

With parallel projects, we are now able to share resources and develop further opportunities for students taking our respective modules to share module content, project insights and experiences. Our work to date represents the first phase of this activity: we have begun with Practicum module content, course design and associated resources. The second phase of this activity will involve working out practically how to share student activities between our modules and integrate the learning opportunities from parallel projects Boston and Limerick. We plan to further to develop these at our project meetings in Limerick, sponsored by a successful Irish Research Council grant, May 4-5th 2017.

4. Develop a visitor program for exchange students in our respective institution

The framework architecture for exchanging students between UMB and UL already exists in via existing student exchange arrangements in both institutions. In addition, in 2016 UL Engage joined the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme (UROP) with partners from University of Minnesota (UMN). UROP programmes enable undergraduate students to apply for funding to carry out faculty-mentored research projects in all academic disciplines in a select number of universities². Boston University is a participant in the UROP programme and this affords a ready mechanism to develop student exchanges between the UL Practicum other UMB practicum projects. These will be progressed further in our next collaborative meeting when Joan Arches, UMB will visit Limerick in May 2017, sponsored by a successful Irish Research Council grant (details below).

5. Additional Outcomes (collaboration, programs, and pursuit of external funding)

The current UMB/UL collaboration afforded an opportunity to apply for funding from the *Irish Research Council New Foundations funding stream – Strand 1b: Enhancing civic society within an international context* (awards up to a maximum of €25,000). The application was successful and in October 2016 was awarded €24,100.

The *#Youth Engage IRC New Foundations* project links together four existing community partnerships between youth workers, young people and academics – including UMB projects and partners led by Joan Arches - in four different international sites³, each with collaborative connections to LYS and/or UL. Together we have agreed to run 'mirror'

² Other universities include: RWTH Aachen University; California State University, Long Beach; University of California, Irvine; University of Cambridge; University of Essex; Florida State University; Georgia Institute of Technology (Georgia Tech); Hong Kong University of Science and Technology (HKUST); University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; Imperial College London; Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT); University of Michigan; University of Michigan-Flint; University of Minnesota; University of New Hampshire; University of Oregon; University of Reading; and the University of Queensland.

³ Boston, Capetown, Malta and Sweden

projects based on the Limerick Be Heard UL Practicum project, which carried out youth and community workshops to address political participation and engagement in Spring 2016. The IRC New Foundations grant provides funding for a follow-up Limerick Practicum project and to draw together our international mirror project partners to share insights into best practice and to devise a research programme to measure the impact of such educational interventions upon civic engagement and political awareness.

Supporting the expansion of youth-focused community engagement at the institutional level, Cynthia Orellana at the Office for Community Partnerships at UMB launched 'engaged circles' to connect multiple faculty members across disciplines who are working with the Boston Public Schools (BPS). In conversations and materials shared in the UMB / UL meetings in person in April 2016 and by phone in November 2016, we outlined how our institutional offices can steward connections. The BPS work connects the local and the transnational in youth-focused community engagement with diverse youth. A meeting of some 30 faculty at UMB on March 31, 2016 generated ideas for next steps (partners, projects, ongoing and new grants), with another meeting planned for May 4, 2016. These meetings are creating templates for 'engaged circles' in other topic areas and with visiting scholars.

At a practical level, the youth-focused community engagement projects build capacity, resources, tools and techniques – made by young people and designed for young people – to promote inclusive educational experiences, civic involvement locally and transnationally, political participation and political agency for justice and inclusion.

In doing so, the *#Youth Engage IRC New Foundations* project in particular will provide a working template for effective engaged research and community collaboration. A goal of the UMB / UL collaboration was to generate such templates. The project is co-designed by participating partners and will be implemented in partnership from start to finish. As not for profit and state organizations, we are keen to demonstrate how complementary and collaborative partners can address issues of public concern in ways that maximize their impact and efficacy.

Projected project Outputs

- A co-created accessible **programme for Young People and Youth workers** on global citizenship, local civic engagement and Youth agency for positive political change.
- A **collaborative framework** for participating academics, young people and youth workers to **share expertise and pedagogic resources** for the development of young people's capacity and agency for positive political engagement
- An **international network** of academic, youth-work and young peoples' organizations with the capacity to develop the research opportunities offered by this project.
- One co-authored **academic journal article**

Future Plans / Outcomes

The collaboration between strong academic institutions and pro-active Youth and Community Services will facilitate evidenced and evaluated peer to peer learning and enable the creation of practical resources by Young People for Young People. Participation in this

project therefore opens up exchange possibilities and joint project possibilities with our international partners, enabling the University of Limerick and University Boston Massachusetts to develop their existing collaboration into a firm foundation for broader international collaborations and funding opportunities. In a challenging global economic climate, we also retain concern for placement of youth into good jobs, many of which today value the skills gained from community engagement training. The UMB / UL collaboration included the respective offices for career placement from its inception (e.g., Mark Kenyon joining the April 18, 2016 session), and several participants in youth-focused projects examine workforce development and workforce transitions.

Our intention is that the partnership network created by this project will have four main outcomes:

- creation of a **co-created online course** advancing democratic political engagement and using the existing e-platforms of network partners.
- elaboration of the **workforce skills** gained in this course and how they translate for prospective employers
- **development of the research dimension** of this project into an international collaborative consortium of Youth workers, young people and academic researchers interested in capturing the creativity and dynamism of young people as a strategic resource for the promotion of inclusive democratic political engagement.
- This project will lay the foundations for **further funding applications** to develop its pedagogic, research and community impact.

Future Funding Opportunities

The UMB/UL collaboration has afforded us a unique opportunity to develop an international project, which can underpin a comparative study and data collection on the impact of educational interventions to promote political and civic engagement.


Our intention is:

1. **to develop a CAROLINE post doc proposal** from the project in the forthcoming round of CAROLINE funding (<http://research.ie/funding/caroline>). We have identified a suitable candidate⁴ and have already started working towards this application, the foundations for which will be explored in the May project meeting.
2. **to explore other opportunities to up-scale our collaborations using Erasmus funding** (<http://www.leargas.ie/calendar/youth-roadshow-limerick/>) These also are already in train with the UL International Office assistance and support and with LYS offices, who are able to access alternative sources of Erasmus mobility funding for international projects that are not available for HEIs alone.
3. **to develop a broader consortia of participating partners –** Since beginning our project, we have been joined by partners from the American University Beirut's Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (CCES). We are pursuing more opportunities to develop funding and exchange opportunities with AUB CCECS in association with the UL International Office.

⁴ Sarah Jay is currently lecturing in Psychology at the University of Limerick, Ireland. She completed her PhD, supervised by Professor Orla Muldoon, and defended her thesis with Professor Caroline Howarth as external examiner, in December 2014. Sarah's PhD research integrates ideas from social psychology with sociological theory and explores social class as a system of inequality.

APPENDIX 1


Example of co-created joint UMB/UL resource used in current parallel practicum modules



UNIVERSITY
of
LIMERICK
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH

#YouthExchange

Young people talking to young people about what matters to them





UMASS
BOSTON

DIRECTION PROVISION


Direct Provision in Ireland refers to the system of care for Asylum Seekers who have come to Ireland hoping to gain refugee status - that is the right to live in Ireland permanently. Direct Provision is intended to provide for the welfare of asylum seekers and their families as they await decisions on their asylum application. It ‘directly provides’ essential services, medical care and accommodation and board with three meals a day provided at set times. Asylum Seekers living in Direct Provision are not allowed to work and are paid €19.10 per week per adult and €15.90 per week per child. Although the system of ‘direct provision’ is overseen by an agency in the Department of Justice, (the Reception and Integration Agency, RIA), the majority of the 35 direct provision centres in Ireland are privately owned and operated, and the standards of accommodation and living conditions vary widely.

The average length of time in direct provision is 5 years. Many asylum seekers have been in the system waiting for their application to be heard for much longer.






IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL
An Chomhairle um Thaiighde in Éirinn



Comhairle na nÓg
Young Voices. Local Issues.



limerick youth service

U
L
E
N
G
A
G
E

© Please feel free to republish or copy this resource. All we ask is that you credit the author(s) and reference and source. UL Engage/
UMass Boston co-created Resource (2017) ‘Youth Exchanges’

APPENDIX 2

The courses listed below that were submitted during the first round of RFI's appear to fit all the criteria that the UL/UMB partnership is seeking.

Course Descriptions from WISER. See additional information is available in the syllabi.

COUNSL 688: The purpose of the practicum is to expose the student to his/her particular field in counseling through actual placement in a facility where appropriate supervision is provided. Class discussions include a review onsite observations and experiences and discussions of current issues in the field.

COUNSL 698: Students are placed as apprentice counselors in schools or agencies under the direct supervision of qualified professionals. Students meet weekly for a three-hour seminar.

EDCG 606: Sociological Foundations of Education:

“This course examines the interrelationships among students, schools, and society. Participants learn about the ways in which race, class, language, and ethnicity influence how we define ourselves and each other in our various encounters within the broader culture of US society. The course examines the historical antecedents influencing how the lives of the immigrant and colonized peoples in the US are defined. It is designed as a foundation for understanding the policies, goals, assumptions, strategies, and practices of multicultural approaches to education. It draws on a variety of models to construct educational curricula that are multicultural and socially reconstructionist. Readings are placed within the context of public schooling today in order to develop students' "cultural consciousness" and awareness of the individual and shared societal assumptions we bring to our teaching experiences.”

Although not specifically community-based, is designed to foster the “development of students’ ‘cultural consciousness’ and awareness of the individual and shared societal assumptions we bring to our teaching experiences.”

UPCD 600: History and Theory of Urban Planning

As activity and professional practice, Urban Planning is commonly understood, as the deliberate set of actions taken by societies to organize the built environment to facilitate and enhance human activity. After a review of foundational readings, the course focuses on the way urban planning came about in the United States and the underlying forces shaping its discourse and logic, including the changing roles of public/private actors, and the planning mentality shaping the theory and practice of the profession. The course also decouples urban planning theory from urban theory by examining three premises; (a) Urban Planning Theory's historical roots and justification are based on a vision of the city rather than arriving at prescriptions, (b) the dependence of effective planning on its context, which means that planning activity needs to be rooted in an understanding of the field in which it is operation, and (c) the objective of planning as conscious creation of the just city, which requires a substantive normative framework.

UPCD 720: Community Development for Urban Planners: This course integrates several bodies of knowledge that made up the bases of community development and urban planning. The course is a critical exploration of the intersection of urban planning and social movements and responses to the post-WWII urban crisis by government(s), particularly the Federal level. It also traces the rise of community development during the 1960's by weaving three interrelated trends; rise of new social movements; changes to the production of space: globalism; and the advent of the post-industrial/informational society; and responses by government at all levels. All three trends transformed urban planning and urban planning theory and practice. The course also adds skills knowledge for urban planners working closely with or wishing to become part of community development organizations in the US or elsewhere.

UPCD 600 and UPCD 720 will be collaborating with the Dudley Street Neighborhood initiative on a "pulse report"- a state of the neighborhood profile.

UPCD 622: Citizen Participation and the Right to the City

Today's City Planner faces new challenges working in the USA. During the past decades, urban scholars and practitioners have raised critical questions on the need to address these challenges (many times in apparent contradiction to each other) and face the limits of urban planning. Campbell (1996) identified three areas, environmental wellness, economic development and growth, and equitability. The Urban Planning and Community Development Program aims to develop urban planners with a clear social justice and equitability vision. The practicing urban planner faces an array of challenges in the globalizing world. Among these, access to rights previously taken for granted that may be limited under neoliberal regimes. This course is designed to explore some of the challenges urban planners face in these areas by reviewing critical literature, planning methodologies, and case studies of successful projects. The focus is to maximize citizen participation.

UPCD 622 engages in an international service learning program that has included the University of Memphis, the University of Catania in Sicily, and potentially may offer the University of Limerick students and faculty an interesting field-based, service-learning experience.

Several other syllabi submitted that appear to have room to bring a community engagement element into (or out of) the classroom. We are also following up on offerings in *Trans Cultural and Community Studies*, *Sociology*, *Human Services*, and a new Masters in *Out of School and After School Time Settings* with its *Civic Engagement* track which Prof. Arches currently being developing.