

comm·unity

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Advanced Television Production Students Work with Local Organizations to Produce Public Service Announcements



by Timmy Kwong

Dr. Michael Grabowski, chair of the Communication Department, typically employs community-engaged learning in one of his courses, COMM 419: Advanced Television Production. This semester, the students in the class worked with [Concourse House Women's Shelter](#), [Center for Graduate School & Fellowship Advisement](#), Turnstyle, [KHCC](#), [The Quadrangle](#), [Van Cortlandt Park Alliance](#), [5th Dimension VR](#), and [NY Fair Trade](#).

At Manhattan College, community-engaged learning, also known as CEL, is a pedagogical approach through which faculty develop community partnerships with the goal of engaging students in relevant

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was set up with an assignment where students worked for a non-profit organization to produce public service announcements based around fundraising, building awareness, and publicizing community events.



and meaningful service, advocacy or research connected to the course content. Faculty, students and community partners join in a mutually beneficial relationship that responds to expressed needs of the local community, and provides an intellectually engaging experience for learners on both sides of the partnership through continuous reflection.

“I found it interesting to see how students utilize what they have learned in the classroom and apply it into the real-world experience,” Grabowski said. “The only real way to gain experience in production is to actually do it, in which the community-engaged learning allows students to deliver a project to an off-campus client, but also learning how to be responsible during the process.”

The course, Advanced Television Production,

“In the past, I always collaborated with on-campus student organizations, where students serve and contribute to our Manhattan College’s community,” Grabowski stated. “Now, with the opportunity of implementing CEL as part of the academic curriculum, I am able to connect students with non-profit groups to serve the community in the Bronx.”

With the chance to engage with an off-campus client, Grabowski found that his students not only have a stronger obligation to complete their work, but also prepare their professional portfolio through each assignment.

Richard Howard, a senior and one of the fellow students in Grabowski’s Advanced Television Production class, perceives that CEL not only enhances his ability to communicate with his clients but also allows him to understand the story behind their needs.

“My experience [in this class] has been wonderful. My partner Heather and I are working with the Concourse House Women’s Shelter,” Howard said. “Our curator has been very open with us and has given us great access to the building and to the mothers in the program. We get to see their artwork and talk about the story behind each piece.”

Currently, Howard and his partner have gotten through some rough cuts of the edit on the project. Although it is their first time navigating the projects for their clients, according to Howard, Dr. Grabowski has been a great resource to help the class to tell the story of Concourse House and the mothers that are a part of the program.

“After learning the foundation of storytelling in class, Heather and I wanted to make sure their story came first. The project is only a minute, yet we make sure that this assignment is not for the grade but for Concourse House, helping to shift the narrative for these mothers who are homeless,” Howard stated. “Overall, it was a pleasure to talk with the mothers and see the smiles on their faces whenever they talk about their children.”

Grabowski is looking forward to the future of CEL in other communication courses offered at Manhattan College, especially after the peak of the pandemic. “Now that we are finally back on campus, I would like to build a larger [CEL] program that covers all of the concentrations [at the Communication Department],” Grabowski emphasized. “If we are able to create a team teaching [program], combining concentrations, such as journalism, PR, Integrated Marketing Communication or Media Production, students not only gain the exposure in various areas outside of their concentration but also collaborate with one another to serve our community.”

COMM 419: Advanced Television Production, is offered to media production concentration students during the spring semester. Students must complete COMM 308: Studio Television Production and COMM 350: Field and Post-Production prior to their enrollment in Advanced Television Production. This class specifically focuses on discussion of techniques in TV production, as well as the practical experience of improving lighting, proper use of special effects, and advanced graphics in media production. ★