

Career Pathways for Community Leadership Pilot Project

Guidance for Participation

Second Pilot Year: FY24



MASSACHUSETTS
Department of
Higher Education



The Career Pathways for Community Leadership (CPCL) pilot project

The CPCL pilot aims to prepare community college students – especially students of color, in alignment with the DHE’s Strategic Plan for Racial Equity – for jobs in government and the non-profit sector in the communities in which they live, working on community problems that they care about. This initiative is now in the second year of a three-year pilot phase. It has two main components:

- A set of courses providing relevant knowledge and skills and leading to a credential, such as a free-standing certificate or a certificate stacked within an associate degree; and
- Among those courses, credit-bearing paid internships in community-based non-profits or government give students hands-on experience doing the work they are training for.

How many students will the CPCL Pilot serve?

Funding for the CPCL Pilot will support up to 75 students this fiscal year. With \$225,000 allocated for FY24, we intend to fund up to five students per college. Internships will be up to 150 hours, and students will earn stipends of \$20 per hour, paid through State Financial Aid.

How does our college participate?

Seven community colleges participated in the first pilot year of the program, FY23. Those colleges are invited to continue this academic year with funded internships beginning in Spring Semester, 2024.

The other eight community colleges are all invited to join the pilot project this year, beginning with funded Civic Engagement Internships in Spring Semester, 2024. To qualify for this funding, a campus will need to:

- 1.) Select a single point of contact to work with the DHE and MACC to coordinate the CPCL Pilot. Ideally this would also be the campus project coordinator.
- 2.) Designate a faculty or staff member as project coordinator to:
 - a. Guide the creation of the curriculum (which we realize will likely take more than this academic year to design and lead through governance);
 - b. Set up Civic Engagement Internships (which can begin this Spring Semester); and
 - c. Recruit and advise students.
- 3.) Complete a brief application indicating your college’s interest in participating by **December 6, 2023.**

The Internships

Civic Engagement Internships will ideally be with community organizations working to bring community members together to address community problems or to share in community development, or with local, state, or national government officials working to address

community problems. The DHE's Dr. John Reiff can help a project coordinator identify possible community partners for the internships, if needed.

Funding for the internships will be available to the colleges for the Spring Semester 2024; we encourage colleges to consider paying half of the planned stipend to participating students at the beginning of the semester and the remainder at the midpoint of the semester.

If the internship course does not have students meeting together on a regular basis for shared reflection on their experiences, we encourage the project coordinators to plan to bring their students together at least twice during the semester to hear about each other's work and the learning that it generates for them.

The Curriculum

The curriculum will vary across campuses, but most will cover the following four areas of knowledge:

- **Critical Consciousness:** Culture, Community and Identity – understanding of self and community, exploring personal history and identity, the impact of race, gender, class, sexuality, culture, oppression and trauma, personal transformation, cultural competency, identity as a change agent.
- **Introduction to Community Organizing:** History, Theory and Practice, including both a review of different approaches to social change and skill development.
- **Understanding the Region and Its History of Community Development and Organizing:** History of social movements and community action in the context of the local economy, local and state government, and politics.
- **Experiential Education:** An internship or practicum involving experience helping bring people together to identify and address a common issue, typically with a community-based non-profit organization or an office of local or state government. We are calling this the Civic Engagement Internship, for which we will provide a stipend.

Other courses which are often offered as part of a Community Change Studies curriculum (see communitylearningpartnership.org) include:

- Advanced community organizing, campaigns and movement-building
- Participatory action research, issue development and popular education
- Political theory, history of social movements
- Social media and communications strategies for social change
- Legislative and electoral strategies
- Issue-related courses, e.g.
 - Environmental issues, including climate change and green jobs
 - Community development
 - Criminal justice reform

- Health care and promotion
- Employment and labor issues
- Education reform
- Affordable and non-discriminatory housing

For a model of a state-wide initiative running in five community colleges, see [California Youth Leadership Corps - CLP \(communitylearningpartnership.org\)](#).

A model curriculum has already been created and approved within the Massachusetts community college system: the [Certificate in Community Leadership at Holyoke Community College](#).

Information for Directors of Financial Aid

Funding for this project will come out of the General Scholarship Account, 7070-0065; **participating students must be eligible to apply for financial aid.** Due to a new law passed in Summer, 2023, this now includes many undocumented students. Detailed guidance on managing the stipends will be sent to financial aid directors.

If you have questions, please contact either:

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