



Experiential Education at York University

Putting theory to work through guided practical experiences
in the classroom, community and workplace.

SOCIAL WORK OPPORTUNITY

The School of Social Work invites you to collaborate with upper-level students in their program who can apply their theoretical capabilities to YOUR research needs. As we prepare students to become critical practitioners and agents of social change, it is crucial for them to have an understanding of social issues facing social service institutions today. While benefitting from academic research tailored to your needs, you will also greatly enhance students' practical knowledge in their field.

Participating in the Fundamentals of Social Work Research seminar can benefit your organization as students lend their theoretical knowledge and developing skills to a collaborative research project designed to support your organization's mission and service delivery.

Our department makes it easy for you to utilize the insights and dedication of our students and faculty.

COURSE INFORMATION

Under the guidance of the instructor, students in Fundamentals of Social Work Research work in small groups to design and implement ethical research strategies in collaboration with a select number of social agencies and non-profit organizations. This partnership provides you the opportunity to launch new projects or strengthen previous initiatives. Students hone the skills they need for effective program design and development, and for future employment in the field of Social Work – while providing you with tangible benefits and outcomes.

COMMUNITY BASED LEARNING (CBL)

As a community partner, you are invited to act as a genuine co-educator in our CBL courses. This is an opportunity for you to work with York faculty members and the Experiential Education office to define research projects, or policy initiatives, that respond to your organization's current needs while also meeting a particular course's learning outcomes.

Once the challenges your organization requires assistance with are identified, you are invited to present these to students during a class visit, whereupon small teams of students are formed based on their chosen project. If warranted by your organizations' current priorities and resources, you are welcome to present more than one proposal to the class.

Though working independently most of the time, your student team will be in touch with you periodically, ensuring the project's optimal alignment with your goals. At the end of the semester, you are invited to attend a short, focused final presentation, where community partners share constructive feedback on their team's performance. Prior to this last visit, you will receive a pre-screened final report in

"This learning mode helped us immensely in building transferable skills that we can utilize in our social work practice, overall helping us to advocate effectively. Through concrete experience, we were able to reflect on the theory we learnt during class."

Claire Morawski, Student Partnership with The Canadian Red Cross

STUDENTS CAN PARTNER WITH YOU TO:

- Conduct literature reviews, analyze and devise effective research methods applicable to your current priorities.
- Design surveys and focus groups to assess demographic changes and emerging needs among the population(s) you serve.
- Develop program evaluation tools to suggest a practical course of action to improve your organization's service delivery to vulnerable populations and other persons in need.
- Identify creative and strategic solutions to deal with key challenges facing your organization.
- Elicit how your organization operates in practice, in light of conceptual and theoretical frameworks found in current literature.
- Perform “action-based” research to generate, inform, and guide strategy & programming.

WHAT WE ASK OF YOU

Currently, we are looking for community partners interested in developing research projects for student teams in an upper-level Social Work seminar. Participating community representatives are required to commit to **TWO** class visits over the semester (courtesy parking pass provided), and speak candidly about the issues they face: the first visit is planned in the beginning of the term, and then you are invited towards the end of the term to attend final presentations.

RECENT COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

- Community Living York South
- The Canadian Red Cross
- Art Gallery of York University
- Applegrove Community Complex
- Toronto Community Housing
- North York Arts
- Aisling Discoveries Child & Family Centre
- EcoHealth
- HorseTouch
- Interim Place - Women’s Shelter
- Catholic Family Services
- PEACH – Promoting Education
- Toronto BMX

“Experiential education enabled us as a group to learn hands on how to conduct our own research in the Social Work field. It was a great way to learn; not just through a lecture, but through doing it ourselves, which gave us some great experience that we can now take into the field.”

Jessica Purvis
Student Partnership with
the Canadian Red Cross

“The two biggest benefits were definitely time and cost savings. It was not a large effort to come into the classroom and the results exceeded the effort. I really appreciated the student contributions.”

Dr. Liz Holmes

NEXT STEPS

To learn more about our Experiential Education program or getting involved:

Karlene Davis
South Ross S900
(416) 736-2100 ext. 70878
eelaps@yorku.ca
www.yorku.ca/laps/ee

liberal arts &
professional studies

