The Bonner Center for Civic Engagement understands “community-based learning” to include traditional service learning as well as other activities. Classes which connect our students to the greater Richmond community for the purpose of furthering their learning are considered community-based learning courses. Our goal is for community-based learning to benefit community organizations and participants as well as the learners.

Modes and Approaches to Community-Based Learning:

- **Study Trips**, including field trips, service trips, and participant observation or shadowing. Example: Students visit local museums and sites of significance related to their course, such as the Holocaust Museum in Washington and the Slave Trail in Richmond, or students studying sustainable development perform service in the Guatemalan Highlands over spring break and tie their service back to their classroom learning.

- **Service Learning**, including student volunteering connected back to classroom learning. Example: Students in a Spanish language class, “Spanish in the Community,” volunteer in various local Spanish-speaking communities and connect these experiences to their classroom learning, or “Justice and Civil Society” students volunteer at various nonprofits working to address local social issues.

- **Collaborative Projects with Community Partners**, including data analysis and research for community partners, producing community-engaged creative works (such as documentaries, murals, etc.), organizational studies and consulting, and sharing course material in schools, prisons, etc. Example: Students in a course called “The Urban Crisis” produce documentary videos on local issues and screen the films for the public, or “Statistics for Business and Economics” students analyze data for local nonprofits.

- **Bringing Guest Speakers into the Classroom.** Example: Providers and patients from a community agency visit and present to a Neuroscience class.

- **Clinical Education, Internships, and Student Teaching.** Example: Law students complete supervised work in a pro bono clinic, or Education students regularly observe and student teach in a local school.