**Field Guide**

**Student Copy**

**Welcome**

Welcome, or Welcome Back, to the CPC Team! Throughout this semester, you will be working on a real-world CPC project by addressing a community need for a local organization.

Your professor has chosen for the class to do a CPC project, and has been approved to do so through a series of applications and review by the CPC Steering Committee. The Steering Committee has approved the pairing of this particular project because it aligns with the goals and outcomes of your course.

Participating in a CPC Project will enhance your knowledge base, help you develop the professional skills you will need when you leave college, and will provide you with a real, tangible learning experience. In CPC projects, you are challenged to put the academic skills you have been honing to test in the real world. Involvement in a CPC project will become a part of your resume and sets you apart when applying for an internship or professional job.

In addition to these educational, personal, and professional benefits, your work will directly impact the life of a community organization. Your work will allow the Community Partner to complete a project that was previously outside of their ability to undertake. Your expertise will provide the partner with a final deliverable that will actually be implemented in their operation. And your partnership will create a community that engages in mutual support.

This guide is just that -- meant to guide you through the process of a CPC project. Over the past few years, we've learned a few things -- and want to share them to help you achieve success! If you ever need us, please reach out immediately so that we can help.

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# Chapter 1

# Understanding and Planning

# Background on the CPC

## Mission

The Roger Williams University (RWU) Community Partnerships Center (CPC) provides project-based assistance to nonprofit organizations, municipalities, government agencies and low and moderate income communities in Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts. Our mission is to undertake and complete projects that will benefit the local community, while providing RWU students with experience in real-world projects that deepen their academic experiences.

## Goals

- Provide well-organized and educationally valid real world, project based experience for RWU students.
- Affect the world outside of RWU by providing community partners with multi-disciplinary assistance that improves economic, social, and physical environments.
- Create and maintain strong, functional, long-term relationships with community partner

## Resources

1. Provides transportation to sites
2. Provides refreshments for meetings and celebratory final presentations
3. Executes project solicitation and provides project coordination
4. Provides and manages CPC student staff assistance such as graduate assistants, fellows, interns, and other staff to complete work necessary for the project that is out of the class' parameters
5. Works with the Office of General Counsel to provide necessary legal documentation and agreements
6. Final product and documentation editing, production, and printing

# Standard Project Schedules

**Weeks 1-2:** Project briefing with faculty and CPC class at start of semester

**Weeks 2-3:** Meet with community partner at RWU, begin research and planning

**Weeks 3-4:** Site visit (if applicable)

**Weeks 4 and beyond:**   Continue to research dialogue with community partner

Mid-semester review

Complete project

Final presentations at end of semester

# Scope of Work

The "scope of work" is the roadmap for the project over the course of the semester. It will identify the work to be done; outline the timeline for that project work, including critical meetings with the partner; and define the deliverables/final outputs of the project.

Prior to the start of the semester, your faculty member and the community partner will have developed a scope of work for the project. It is critical for you to follow the timeline defined by the scope of work to ensure thorough communication and a high quality final product. The scope of work may be altered as needed during the semester to keep the project on track, but only after all parties agree to changes.

# Project Timeline: One Critical Part of the Scope of Work

The scope of work and timeline template in this book is one way to structure a plan. Having a timeline in place at the start of the semester provides clarity for all project participants. It will allow everyone to budget their time accordingly and will set meetings at critical times to allow partners the opportunity to give feedback before the final stages of the project. Most importantly, creating a timeline at the outset of a project allows everyone to focus on project work rather than scheduling during development stages.

# Final Deliverables

The scope of work and timeline should also detail all final deliverables that you and your team will create for the community partner. Typically, final deliverables are the end product of your coursework, be they research, designs, business plans or recommended actions steps.

A copy of these final products should be submitted to the CPC at the same time they are submitted to your professor for grading.

## Chapter 1 TIPS

Schedule your work on the project throughout the semester. Don't load yourself with work during times that you know will be busy for other courses. Use your time, and that of your classmates, thoughtfully and respectfully.

Plan for more work near the end of the semester, to ensure the professional quality of the final product

Schedule site visits when they are necessary and in a timely manner. Schedule visits *in advance.* Coordinating between many parties often takes considerable time to schedule.

Put the dates on your calendar immediately for any meetings and presentations.

# [TEMPLATE]
## CPC Project Scope of Work

**Project & Location:** _____

**Community Partner:** _____

**Faculty, Course Designation:** _____


Project Statement of Goals: This project will _____

Project Deliverables: This project will produce _____


History shows that CPC projects excel when frequent communication is established and carried out through the semester. Consider implementing the important check-points below into your scope:


Faculty and Partner Scope-Creating Meeting Date:                                    _____
Introductions & Overview of CPC Process; Establish Goals, Meetings, Timelines

Project Kickoff Meeting on Campus Date:                                              _____
Intro to Partner's mission, programming, communities served, issues faced; scope overview

Initial Site Visit Date:                                                            _____
Project review; discussions and tours; gain understanding of partner & partner's location

Mid-Semester Check-in Date:                                                         _____
Is the project on the right course? What are your future plans?

Final Project Presentation Date:                                                    _____
On campus or at partner site; may be during final exam period

## WORKING TIMELINE

| Objective 1: Background/Research/Gathering Materials/Gathering Project Resources | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **TIMELINE** | **TASKS/ACTIVITIES** | **DELIVERABLES – DUE BY** | **RESPONSIBLE PARTY** |
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| **All Final Materials Submitted to CPC *no more than 30 days after grades are due*** | | | |

# Chapter 2

# Implementation, Communication, and Management

# Communication

Clear, consistent, and professional communication will be the driving force of your project. In addition to keeping an open line of communication between the students, faculty, and partner, the CPC requires that 5 meetings take place over the course of the semester. The best practices for open communication and these required meetings are detailed below.

If at any time during the course of your project you are having difficulty reaching your contact(s) or are not receiving answers in a timely manner, please ***notify the CPC staff*** **as soon as possible**. Our job is to ensure that all parties are following through on their requirements during the project process.

## 5 Required/Recommended Meetings

1. **Faculty and Community Partner Scope of Work**
   a. Introductions and overview of CPC Process, establish goals, meetings, timelines
2. **Project Kickoff Meeting on Campus**
   a. Intro to partner's mission, programming, communities served, issues faced, scope overview
3. **Initial Site Visit**
   a. Project review; discussions and tours; gain understanding of partner and partner's location
4. **Mid-Semester Check-in**
   a. Is the project on the right course? What are our future plans?
5. **Final Project Presentation**
   a. On campus or at partner site; may be during final exam period
   b. Optional: CPC Come to Class to discuss CPC and project process [1]

# Meetings and Site Visits

Project groups should meet often to ensure that all parties are in agreement regarding the project's progress. Meetings allow each party to react to and converse about the project's development, which creates better results.  In addition, frequent meetings between the student groups will prepare students for meetings with other RWU teams, other groups, and the community partner.

## 1. Organizing Meetings with the Community Partner

Successful CPC project teams meet with community partners at a minimum of 5 times throughout the semester, as outlined in the scope of work timeline.

The CPC encourages students to reach out to the representatives from the community partner at any time during the course of the project to ask questions and provide updates to the community partner.

We highly recommended that if you are working on this project as part of a team, a CPC liaison be assigned to be the central point of contact between the team, the partner, the faculty, and the CPC.

## 2. Off Campus Meetings

The CPC has two twelve-passenger vans available to transport groups to meet the community partner in the field. Students or faculty should schedule the vans with the CPC *two weeks prior to the desired meeting date*.

Your whole team should be prepared with all materials, questions, and pertinent information to ensure maximum efficiency of the site visit.

## 3. On Campus Meetings

We encourage faculty or the student liaison to reach out to the community partner to schedule meetings on campus. Please notify the CPC when these meetings on campus will take place – we will provide the community partner with directions, parking, a campus map, and directions to your meeting location.

## 4. Organizing Meetings with Other RWU Teams

The CPC staff will notify you if other faculty, students or groups at RWU are working with the same Community Partner as your team. We encourage you to share information or collaborate where possible.

The CPC recommends [2]at [NS3]least one meeting at the beginning of the project that brings together students working on projects for the same community partner. This meeting will allow you to understand the broader scope of work for the community partner, meet other students working towards similar goals, and share information and ideas as project work begins.

## 5. Organizing Meetings with Other Groups

The CPC encourages faculty and students to reach out to others who may be able to provide knowledge and assistance on the project. If the community partner is working with any external groups or individuals such as another organization, a contractor, consultant, or company who can help drive the project, it may be highly beneficial to meet with them.

# Professional Etiquette with Multiple Modes of Communication

Please feel free to reach out to your contacts at the community partner organization via email at any time during the project. It is most efficient if student CPC teams designate a CPC liaison to serve as the point of contact with the partner.

Community partners are active employees in the professional world and should always be communicated with formality. Always use full sentences and proper grammar; do not use text message shorthand or slang.

> **THE 48-HOUR RULE**: ALL PROJECT PARTIES SHOULD RESPOND TO E-MAIL OR PHONE INQUIRIES WITHIN 48 HOURS. THIS WILL ALLOW THE PROJECT TO REMAIN ON COURSE.

## Email Etiquette & Signature Lines

The CPC staff is always happy to pre-read any communication and provide support and suggestions to students at any time during the project process on best practices in communicating with the community partner. Begin e-mails by addressing the partners, create the body of text, and include a personalized signature line.
An example:

Connie Souphanousinphone
Project Name

## Verbal Phone Call

Some community partners can best be reached over the phone. If you are not getting a response by email, give them a call. If they don't answer, leave a message and phone again tomorrow.

Phone calls are efficient methods of communication. One five-minute phone call can sometimes save you half a dozen emails.

> AFTER EACH PHONE CALL, SEND A QUICK FOLLOW UP EMAIL THAT HIGHLIGHTS WHAT YOU DISCUSSED, ACTION STEPS, AND HOW THOSE ACTION STEPS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED

## Group Texts - For Student Group Communication

According to a recent Forbes article statistic "90 percent of text messages get opened within the first 3 minutes of delivery." This means that group texts are an effective tool in student group communication. Include all members of the group in a group text to schedule meeting times, schedule meeting locations,

check in, or report on individual progress. For very important communications, be sure to follow up with an e-mail or other form of notification.

### Social Media

Please do post to the CPC Social Media sites! The CPC loves to have your progress shared, especially when accompanied by a snazzy picture of work being done. Like our Facebook page and follow us on Twitter and Instagram.

When posting on social media sites, be sure to practice careful professionalism. Make sure the subject matter is appropriate for public viewing and is respectful of all parties. By saying something that could be perceived as offensive to the community partner or the populations they serve, you could jeopardize the project, the community partner's relationship with the university, and your professional integrity.

# Technology Available for Organizing Shared Material

As technology is widely available and diverse in platform, the CPC leaves decisions about which programs to use up to faculty. Here is a list of useful suggestions:

### GoTo Meeting, Skype - Video Platforms

In-person meetings may not always be possible. In order to maximize everyone's time and availability for meetings, the CPC will be happy to arrange for the use of GoTo Meeting or Skype for any teams that would like to teleconference with their community partner.

### Cloud Software

We recommend using DropBox or Google Drive to share files. WeTransfer.com only sends files, but can handle large file sizes. These sites can be accessed remotely by all members of the group.

### Bridges

The CPC will use the Bridges platform as a means of sharing articles, information, and updates with all participants on a project. We do ask that all community partners be added to the project site for Bridges or the course site if that will be used.[4]

# Handling Media Inquiries

The Marketing and Communications Department at RWU manages all Public Relations and Media related to the CPC. **At any time, should you or your teammates be contacted by a local media outlet regarding your project, please refer them to the CPC offices before you answer any questions.**

# Chapter 2 TIPS

Research the Community Partner's organization and the communities they serve: check out the Community Partner's webpage, read news articles pertinent to their issues and area.

If you need to schedule a meeting with the Community Partner or other groups on campus, do so sooner rather than later. The sooner they are on your calendar, the Community Partner's calendar and the CPC's calendar, the more effective we can all be together.

If you are working on a project as part of a larger group, know that it may not be possible for every participant to attend each meeting or site visit. Please plan accordingly and make sure those attending have all of the tools and information they need to host a successful meeting or visit.

Keep in contact with the Community Partner, your faculty member, and your CPC Project Manager throughout the entire project process

Community Partners will not be at your beck and call. Plan ahead for meetings; be on time for meetings, and follow-up meetings with a memo stating any conclusions and agreements reached.

Avoid the 'scope creep.' Although some changes are inevitable during the project, it's important to make sure new elements to the project aren't added without talking to your faculty member first.

Keep a close tab on the work of everyone on your team to ensure they are on track with the project scope and desired deliverables. You are all accountable for the final product. It's better to know when a project is going astray sooner rather than later. The CPC staff is happy to help with tracking the process of the project.

# Chapter 3

# Wrapping Up Your Project

# Final Presentations

The CPC encourages students and faculty to host final presentations for the Community Partner. This professional presentation can be held during regularly scheduled class time, during the final exam period, or at another pre-determined time/location.

**A copy of the final presentations should be delivered to the CPC offices for use in the final project book. Presentations can be uploaded to DropBox or Google Drive, emailed, or delivered on a flash drive/cd.**[NS5]

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**PRO TIP**: The CPC would like to turn your final presentation into a celebration of work -- talk to the CPC about getting snacks and other support for that day!

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# Project Documentation and Final Papers

All CPC projects must deliver digital copies of all final materials created for the Community Partner to the CPC office.

Final materials should include the following but are not limited to:

- Final papers in Word and/or PDF format
- Final document created (surveys, business plans, manuals, etc.) in Word and/or PDF format
- Photographs documenting the work process, work site, or others related to the project in Jpeg format
- Drawings, renderings, sketches and models in PDF format
- Screenshots or mockups of website designs in PDF format
- Images, drawings or graphics created in PDF and Jpeg formats
- Maps created in PDF format
- Presentations created for the partner and for the student presentation in PDF and/or PowerPoint format
- Spreadsheets or data used for the project in Excel format

All project teams are also required to submit a signed copy of the DOCS@RWU Author Submission Agreement for release into the Digital Repository at the RWU Library. Items placed in the Digital Repository will be searchable on the Internet.

## What Happens with the Final Documentation?

Final materials are created into a book format by the CPC staff, sent to a contracted graphic designer to be placed in a template with images, and proofread twice by CPC staff and the graphic designer. During the process, CPC staff and the designers will correct any grammatical or punctuation errors in the final paper; content of the paper will not be edited or changed.

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### Chapter 3 TIPS

You have a responsibility not simply to do what the client wants, but to educate yourself on the issues. This is an opportunity to cultivate cultural awareness and competency. Become an expert on the topic, so you can advise the Community Partner appropriately.

Think of the CPC project as a puzzle and challenge your creativity. This is something you should be able to point to with pride after it is completed.

What you think is good or great may not be what the client thinks is good or great. Be open to seeing other perspectives.

During the process, keep in mind the final documentation items that the CPC will need to turn into the Community Partner.

Turn in a preliminary copy of all materials to the CPC office prior to final presentation and a final copy within 30 days after project's completion.

If you are given any materials by the community partner, please return all items to them (photos, books, cd, etc.) before you leave at the end of the semester. We don't want anyone to walk off with any original documentation or materials that don't belong to RWU or the CPC.

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