

Community-Academic Team-Teaching in a CBPR Course: Lessons Learned about Course Instruction

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ABSTRACT:

Background and Objectives: Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) involves community and academic partners working collaboratively to understand and address local challenges. Undergraduates who engage in CBPR through a course can learn valuable research and professional skills, but we found no studies describing the experiences of community and academic partner instructors who have co-taught undergraduate CBPR courses. We describe lessons the instructors learned from collaboratively teaching one such course.

Lessons Learned: The lessons we include highlight how community-academic team-teaching can: 1) provide unique opportunities to teach and model partnership and collaboration, 2) incorporate non-traditional learning opportunities for students to practice skills and engage in content reflection, 3) be challenged by differing community and academic priorities, and 4) surface power dynamics in the classroom that should be explicitly discussed.

Conclusions: Community and academic partners can successfully team-teach in an undergraduate CBPR course and encourage the development of important skills that can be transferable to the real world. Focusing on offering traditional nontraditional learning opportunities and modelling partnership and collaboration can also facilitate this. Beyond these benefits, instructors considering a model like this should be prepared to intentionally engage in discussions within and outside the classroom about respective priorities and the ways in which knowledge that is traditionally valued in academic settings can create power dynamics in the classroom. Ultimately, structural supports, such as institutional funding for community partners and consideration of benefits to benefit community partners and organizations beyond the research itself can facilitate these types of collaborations.

KEYWORDS: Curriculum, Students, Teaching < Education, Community-Based Participatory Research, Community health partnerships, Community health research

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Community-based participatory research (CBPR) begins with a research topic of interest to community partners and involves their direct input and guidance throughout the research process¹ in order to best understand and address concerns faced by communities². CBPR approaches have been incorporated into many studies to address health concerns ranging from chronic illness management and education¹⁻³ to social determinants of health such as community violence⁴ and environmental health⁵. Ultimately, through established trust, mutual interest, and commitment to community concerns, CBPR can improve the health of communities³.

CBPR collaborations may involve student engagement at the undergraduate and graduate levels⁴⁻⁷. These types of partnerships can present valuable student learning opportunities, including acquisition of research skills⁴, development of professional skills, and an appreciation for community input and collaboration^{6,7}. Despite these benefits, there are complexities associated with CBPR training of undergraduates, particularly in academic and community co-teaching collaborations.

There are many models for co-teaching; throughout this paper, we describe a “team teaching”^{8,9} model adopted to teach a course on CBPR where both instructors are equally involved in lesson planning and teaching. Studies have shown instructor perceptions that team-teaching exposes students to different perspectives, offers students opportunities to interact with additional role models, and helps with objective evaluations of student work¹². In addition to perceived benefits, academic instructors also highlight the complexities of team-teaching¹³. One study with collegiate instructors showed that while team-teaching resulted in beneficial co-learning opportunities for instructors, power and authority in teaching relationships can mean

that more senior faculty members have more decision-making power in course implementation¹³. Another study described challenges related to team-teaching with adult learners, including the need for more course preparation time and the potential for conflict between instructors¹⁴. Despite the potential of team-teaching and CBPR, we found no studies that demonstrate this model of learning and underscore the perspective of a community-academic teaching team, co-instructing a CBPR curriculum. Our goal is to discuss lessons learned related to course design and implementation from the perspective of the two instructors.

PARTNERSHIP CONTEXT

Historical Context of Course and Community Partnerships

A co-taught, semester-long, CBPR course from Spring 2020 is the basis of our study. It is offered through the Department of Community Health at Tufts University, a private liberal arts institution in Massachusetts. Students majoring in Community Health study population-level health holistically from a multidisciplinary perspective, consider the social determinants of health, and critically evaluate the systemic challenges that affect individuals, communities, and populations¹⁶. The university (9% acceptance rate) has an undergraduate student body of around 6,000 students, more than half of whom are white¹⁷. Tuition is >\$75,000 per year.

The CBPR course that is the focus of our study trains students in basic research methods, CBPR principles, partnership strategies, community-based data collection, data analysis, and dissemination of findings. Each year, students' partner with a different community organization to undertake a research project that the organization identifies. From 2014–2018, the course was *solely* taught by the academic partner instructor (API)⁷, who is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Community Health at Tufts University. The API was awarded a grant through

Tufts University to support CBPR work in Spring 2020. In these early years (2014-2018), the research project undertaken by students was also initiated by the API but implemented with the support of community partnerships that the API cultivated. In the past, community partners varied, and their contributions included working with the API to define the research project, providing input on the research methods, facilitating participant recruitment, and contributing to data collection and dissemination of the research.

The nature of the partnerships changed in Spring 2019 when the Executive Director of the Welcome Project, an organization that focuses on strengthening the collective power, capacity, and advocacy of immigrants¹⁵, initiated a new collaboration with the API through the CBPR course. The Welcome Project began in 1987 at the Mystic Public Housing Development in Somerville, Massachusetts, where a dedicated group of tenants and community members worked to support newcomers facing discrimination and harassment at the Mystic. Today, the organization continues to provide programming and resources for immigrant families from low-income communities. In addition to general programming, Welcome Project staff have experience collaborating with researchers from other departments, including CH at Tufts University.

In Spring 2019, leaders from the Welcome Project identified the research topic and provided extensive input throughout the research process. Additionally, a community partner representative from the organization attended several sessions of the course to provide feedback to students on the research components. After presenting initial findings to community members, including school board members and staff, and leaders from local nonprofits and youth connected to the school system, we received feedback to broaden our recruitment methods to

reach parents not directly connected to the Welcome Project. In response the course was revised in 2020 and the course model shifted from one where the API was predominantly responsible for course design and implementation to one where a member of the leadership team at the Welcome Project, the Community Partner Instructor (CPI) redesigned and co-taught the course with the API. The backgrounds of both the CPI and API are described below.

COURSE INSTRUCTORS

The CPI, Director of Parental Engagement at the Welcome Project has a master's degree in education, four years of experience working with immigrant families (parents and children), and relationships with community partners. The Executive Director of the Welcome Project encouraged her to co-teach the course and work closely with the API on *both* the research and the course design and implementation, given her extensive background in education and training and relationships with families. The CPI is also a daughter of Salvadoran immigrants.

The API has a doctorate in maternal and child health. She has eight years of experience teaching undergraduates and fourteen years of experience with CBPR, program evaluation, and needs assessment work. She is Indian American, was born in India to Indian parents and immigrated to this country in her early teen years.

COURSE DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION IN 2020

In the spring 2020 semester, the research partnership focused on the same topic as 2019; however, the course model shifted to be responsive to the broadened recruitment needs and the co-instructors worked together to restructure the course curriculum in order to maximize the learning opportunity for students and ensure they were properly trained to interact with and collect data from community members.

In Spring 2020, the CPI and API co-taught the redesigned CBPR course to 12 undergraduate students. The course ran as two 75-minute sessions, twice per week. From January to mid-March 2020, the course was in person, and because of COVID, sessions after mid-March occurred online. Throughout the semester, students focused on a project suggested by the Welcome Project to best understand the experiences of immigrant families in the Somerville, Massachusetts educational system.

Before beginning the course, the co-instructors focused on three objectives: (a) identify goals for the course research project; (b) create classroom sessions and assessments to teach CBPR principles and practice; and (c) cultivate the instructors' collaborative teaching relationship. From the beginning, the CPI and API committed to engaging openly and jointly in course planning, from syllabus development to identifying course and research goals to developing and grading assessments. They co-identified the research goals and discussed how to structure the learning experience to accomplish these goals. Further, given the focus on engaging immigrant community members who may not have previously participated in research, it was, especially, important to the API and CPI that they both were closely involved in training the students to undertake the research. After completing the semester and reflecting on their experiences, both instructors were eager to share lessons learned with others who are considering team-teaching a similar type of course. Student reflections and learning outcomes from participating in this course are described in two previous papers^{7,18}; thus, we do not explicitly incorporate the student perspective here.

METHODS UNDERTAKEN TO DEVELOP LESSONS

One year after teaching the course, the API and CPI, along with an academic colleague, a former CBPR student, and a former student, all from the Department of Community Health, engaged in post-course reflections and produced this paper on the instructor experience to identify key takeaways from the co-teaching experience. The co-authors were invited because of their experience with CBPR both in (SY) and outside of this course (AK) and their involvement in prior papers related to this course (SY and KK). Notably, these reflections were initially undertaken as part of a quality improvement exercise, allowing the instructors to document their co-teaching experience for future iterations of the course; thus, IRB approval was not sought. We hope that by sharing these reflections other instructors will consider our findings when implementing similar collaborations.

We derived the lessons learned through a systematic process, which we describe here. Immediately after completing the course, the API and CPI informally discussed the lessons and takeaways from the course with a specific focus on course design and implementation. The API and CPI reflected on the following questions in this initial discussion: “What did we learn about teaching this class?”, “What would we change about the course as designed and implemented?”, “What worked well?”, and “What was challenging?”. The API and CPI informally recorded our reactions to these questions by writing down notes. The notes about these reactions served as the basis for a conversation one year later in spring 2021 with the additional co-authors of this paper. In the spring 2021 conversation, all the co-authors met via Zoom 4-8 times and the notes from the spring 2020 post-course reflection were shared with the larger team.

While the API and CPI had the most direct instruction experience with the course, the other co-authors then collaborated with the API and CPI to build on these lessons by asking

probing questions in these meetings to clarify the lessons and elicit illustrative examples from the API and CPI. The goal of these meetings was to construct lessons that would be informative to other instructors teaching similar courses and the co-authors were thus well-positioned to ask probing questions given their own experiences as students and instructors in undergraduate contexts. Following each conversation, the API and CPI would rework each “lesson learned” and share a subsequent draft of their responses with the team. Once all the “lessons learned” were drafted, each co-author reviewed them closely and finalized the lessons. Collectively, this process yielded four lessons learned that we seek to share with community and academic instructors seeking to collaboratively teach a course of this nature. Various aspects of the course are described below to illustrate and provide context for each lesson.

LESSONS LEARNED

Lesson #1: Community-academic team-teaching provides unique opportunities to teach and model partnership and collaboration.

A key tenet of CBPR involves partnership. In this community and academic co-taught course, the CPI and API incorporated many opportunities to both discuss and model collaboration and partnership. *First*, in preparation for team-teaching, the API and CPI first built their partnership through numerous in-person planning meetings in the community, often over a shared meal. When the course started, the API and CPI shared information about their relationship-building efforts with students and encouraged relationship-building within the student team through an early shared meal. At this meal, they circulated among students and “seeded” connection-building “small talk.” *Second*, the instructors leveraged the unique perspectives that they each brought to the curriculum development and course facilitation. For

example, the CPI, who had extensive experience with community organizing incorporated many engaging activities that focused on visually understanding or learning materials and were responsive to different student learning styles. The API designed classroom activities that encouraged engaging with academic learning tenants such as critical thinking and questioning. Both the CPI and API were careful to not prioritize the academic voice over the community voice in the classroom and were intentional about making space for each other to lead in-class conversations and sessions and both responding to student questions, in some cases with different perspectives and opinions. This intentional approach was designed to teach student the importance of both contributing in the classroom but also making space for others to be heard and in doing so, benefiting from a variety of different perspectives. *Third*, the instructors provided many opportunities for students to work in pairs, practicing partnership and collaboration both within and outside the classroom. The API and CPI both circulated around the room during in-class collaboration to help students navigate disagreement and conflict. They also met with students in small groups, as needed, to navigate any partnership and collaboration conflicts and disagreements that arose outside of class time.

Lesson #2: Create non-traditional learning opportunities for students to practice skills and engage in content reflection

The API and CPI initially discussed the use of both traditional and non-traditional course assignments, ultimately prioritizing non-traditional assignments that inspired the creation of research materials (e.g., infographics), enabled learning experiences (e.g., student facilitation of classroom sessions that mirrored community meetings) that led to meaningful skill development for future community-engaged projects and environments and when possible, directly benefited

the community organization (e.g., created a product community partners could use) or prepared students to engage more effectively with the CPI and community members in the future. (Table 1). All assignments were designed to support different stages of the research process (e.g., instrument development, data collection, dissemination etc.) and facilitate reflection on these components. Ultimately despite the incorporation of unique coursework and the students' research efforts, COVID hindered primary data collection within the community due to safety concerns. Further, online data collection was not possible given the lack of technology access among community participants. This required the instructors to revise the course assignments for the latter half of the semester. After the arrival of the pandemic, students focused on analyzing existing data collected from the Spring 2019 cohort of students rather than collecting their own data. For example, rather than presenting their final dissemination products in a community forum, participants presented them on Zoom to their classmates and instructors. Despite these challenges, students provided community partners with products (e.g., infographics) they could use in their own work.

At the start of the semester the API and CPI identified four overarching goals related to course assignments. The first goal (Goal #1) was to teach students to reflect on CBPR principles and apply them in critiques of research to support the implementation of a research project. The second goal (Goal #2) was to encourage student reflections on identity and its impact on the research process. The third goal (Goal #3) was to teach students to speak respectfully to and about immigrant communities, community members, organizations, and partners, and to provide feedback to students to discourage “othering” of immigrant communities, perpetuation of stereotypes, and recognize the nuanced narratives of people who had immigrated to the U.S.

Furthermore, both instructors provided feedback regarding ways to reframe language to demonstrate respect for the perspectives and expertise of community partners and members. The final goal (Goal #4) was to teach students creative and accessible ways to present research methods and findings. Despite the challenges associated with COVID, the students were able to develop products that were useful to the community organization.

Table 1. Examples of Course Assignments

Assignment	Relevant Learning Goals	Assignment Requirements/ Prompts	% Of Final Grade	Key Grading Focus	Assignment Format
Baseline Conversation and Short Paper	Goal #2	Conversation and short paper to discuss expectations for the course, identify areas for learning and growth, motivations for taking the course and knowledge of and skills/capacity in CBPR.	10%	Ability to converse and write thoughtfully about areas for learning and growth, motivations etc.	1. Written paper 2. In-person conversation with instructors
Reflection Assignment #1 (Articulate)	Goal #1	Why is CBPR a useful approach to the study of health in underserved communities?	10%	Ability to articulate CBPR principles when studying health in underserved communities.	Written paper
Reflection Assignment #2 (Apply)	Goal #2	What biases, perceptions and privileges would affect your ability to learn from participants? How do you	10%	Ability to apply and explain the practice of CBPR principles in one's own project.	Written paper

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		acknowledge these privileges and work to unlearn the biases and perceptions?			
Reflection Assignment #3 (Critique)	Goal #1	Critique an existing research study using the principles of CBPR, noting which principles are effectively incorporated, and which were not.	10%	Ability to demonstrate an understanding of CBPR principles in a critique of one existing research study.	Written paper
Reflection Assignment #4	Goal #2 Goal #3	A paper about the student's experience with data collection or experience preparing for data collection.	10%	Assessment of student ability to show insight about their own experiences (strengths and challenges) related to data collection.	Written paper
Final Dissemination Product	Goal #3 Goal #4	Create one of four final dissemination products.	15%	Assessment of student teams' ability to create community-accessible products to share research methods and findings.	1. Written and recorded presentation <i>or</i> 2. Funder report <i>or</i> 3. Two-page summary with infographics <i>or</i> 4. Academic poster

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Final 5-page paper	Goal #1 Goal #2 Goal #3	Paper that discusses the principles of CBPR in the context of the project and the benefits and challenges to engagement in CBPR.	15%	Assessment of student's ability to write a critical reflection on the semester-long research and partnership in the context of CBPR principles.	Written paper
Classroom Session Facilitation	Goal #3	Co-facilitate a classroom session.	10%	Assessment of student preparation (e.g., proactiveness in drafting an agenda early, clarity of session goals, structure and timing, content, communication with guests invited to the classroom, and general facilitation skills (e.g., ability to foster discussion))	1. Classroom agenda 2. In-class facilitation
Endline Conversation	Goal #1 Goal #2 Goal #3	30-minute conversation with course instructors within the last 2 weeks of the semester to learn about student	10%	Assessment of student's ability to verbally reflect on the semester-long research and partnership in the	In-person conversation with instructors

		experiences in the course and understanding of CBPR.		context of CBPR principles.	
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Lesson #3: Recognize that differing CPI and API personal and organizational priorities can create team-teaching challenges.

During this course, differing CPI and API personal and organizational priorities became increasingly evident. The CPI's personal priority was to participate in an engaging teaching experience with undergraduate students that would enable her to develop her knowledge and skills in CBPR research and partnership with academic institutions. Her organizational priorities were to center the voices of immigrant parents throughout the research process and facilitate an empirical understanding of the educational experiences of immigrant families. The API's main personal priorities were to participate in a fulfilling teaching experience that would enable her to grow her knowledge and skills in a CBPR partnership, and to cultivate good working relationships with the CPI and her organization to promote future collaboration. Her institutional priority was to provide a rigorous applied CBPR learning experience for undergraduate students at Tufts.

While there was some overlap in personal and organizational priorities between the API and CPI, a misalignment existed. The CPI felt primarily accountable to the community organization and community members, while the API felt primarily accountable to the students and their learning. The CPI was rightly concerned about how their organization would be perceived in the community if students made mistakes while conducting research. Although the API recognized this concern, she sometimes felt a tension between allowing students to practice and fail in the spirit of learning and ensuring that community members were not treated disrespectfully or harmed in any way. To address this tension, the CPI and API made extra efforts to thoroughly train and prepare students before allowing data collection.

The lesson we gained from this experience is that team teachers ought to discuss this misalignment explicitly and regularly throughout the processes of course planning and implementation. Despite the obvious need for these discussions, both instructors struggled to find time for them. Time before each classroom session was often spent preparing to teach and conversations after class were rushed and focused largely on administrative work, rather than discussions about personal or organizational priorities. Further, the CPI did not hold a faculty appointment at Tufts and there was no avenue to financially cover her time as an instructor; it was covered instead by The Welcome Project. Although a grant from Tufts, written by the API, API and members of the CPI's partner organization supported the research, the funding did not provide direct compensation to the CPI for her teaching or time. The constraints in time and financial resources made it difficult for the CPI to dedicate additional time to sustained discussions that would have benefited the teaching experience.

Lesson #4: Power dynamics may arise in the classroom when API and CPI co-instructors team-teach, and these should be explicitly discussed.

In this course, instructors regularly encouraged students to recognize the impact of being Tufts students, the privileges that come with this institutional identity, and how these privileges contribute to power differentials when navigating community spaces and relationships. Students and instructors also considered other aspects of identity manifestations with community partners. Despite these discussions, the instructors were surprised by the extent to which power differentials manifested within the classroom. By engaging in team-teaching at Tufts, the CPI entered a space where an academic pedigree confers power.

After the semester concluded, the CPI and API agreed that they did not sufficiently discuss or debrief about power manifestations within the academic space of the classroom. They

discussed the necessity of creating more space for students and instructors to reflect on power dynamics and tensions. These conversations could help students further challenge preconceived ideas of “expertise”. For example, many students perceived the CPI to be the “community expert” and the API to be the “research expert,” despite the CPI’s extensive qualitative research experience. This misperception by students might be addressed in part through direct and explicit discussions about power in the classroom. Despite acknowledging the need for more discussion, both instructors agreed that they had insufficient time to prepare for these discussions due to workload and professional responsibilities. In future iterations of this course, it would be helpful to carve out space each week to accommodate these types of discussions.

DISCUSSION

We have described four key lessons learned from a team-taught course, and here we further explore the connection between each of these lessons and the academic literature. Based on our experiences, we recommend that instructors considering a team teaching model with an academic and a community partner (1) incorporate strategies to demonstrate and practice partnership and collaboration in the classroom (Lesson #1), (2) incorporate academic and non-academic learning opportunities to encourage student learning and reflection (Lesson #2), (3) intentionally discuss priorities and how they can affect the ability of community and academic partners to engage in the teaching experience (Lesson #3), and finally, (4) talk explicitly about how power dynamics can manifest in the classroom (Lesson #4).

Lesson #1

With respect to our first lesson learned, we found no studies describing courses explicitly designed *and* co-taught by academic and community partners that discuss student learning related to partnership and collaboration development. However, our prior study of this CBPR

course (before it was co-taught) showed that participating in a CBPR experience can promote skill development among students, such as improving their collaboration abilities⁶. In our prior study, students also reported learning to respect other viewpoints and to balance the differing perspectives and backgrounds of their partners and teammates while still progressing towards a shared goal⁶. Students recognized the importance of collaboration in public health, specifically with community partners⁶. A study of an interdisciplinary CBPR course on homelessness found that students reported developing collaboration skills when working with other students from different disciplines⁷. Students also commented on the benefit of learning from diverse perspectives⁷. Studies from other contexts also show that team teaching can encourage student learning related to partnership and collaboration; a study in the nursing discipline gave instructors the opportunity to model working across different perspectives⁸. Similarly, authors of a scoping review of team teaching in undergraduate nursing programs showed students the benefits and challenges of collaboration⁹. Future public health professionals need technical and scientific skills; however, the importance of teaching them interpersonal skills such as collaboration and teamwork should also be emphasized¹⁰, and these types of learning opportunities should be offered to undergraduate students.

Lesson #2

With respect to our second lesson learned, we are heartened to see that nontraditional learning assessments have received much recent attention, alongside the idea of ‘ungrading’ strategies to facilitate student learning; many ideas about ‘ungrading’ and non-traditional learning strategies were recently compiled by S. Blum (2020)¹¹. In our study, we found that team teachers can draw from their respective strengths to incorporate different types of academic and non-academic learning opportunities to facilitate skill building and reflection. While we found no

examples of similar academic-community co-designed and co-taught classroom experiences, in one doctoral-level mixed-methods CBPR seminar, students were evaluated on traditional course assignments like research papers and also on parameters such as their interactions with community partners¹². Offering students opportunities to gain knowledge and develop professional skills through these types of non-academic learning opportunities can facilitate student transitions into their future professional environments⁷.

Lesson #3

With respect to our third lesson, it is important for community and academic co-instructors to talk about shared and divergent goals in a classroom environment and to discuss how these might shape the co-teaching experience. In one study of co-teaching in an undergraduate nursing environment, an instructor emphasized that co-teaching was not just about division of work, but about work designed to achieve a shared goal⁸.

Thus, it is critical to dedicate time to meeting regularly to discuss goals and reflect on the teaching experience, time constraints this challenging. While not specific to classroom community-academic co-teaching, a systematic review of 50 research studies noted that lack of time was a significant barrier for community-academic partnerships²². Another study of student, academic, and community partner experiences in a community-based project noted that insufficient compensation and burdensome demands on time experienced by community partners also challenged ongoing engagement in community-academic partnerships²³.

Academic co-instructors should explore opportunities to compensate CPIs for their involvement not just in research projects, but *also* for their involvement in teaching. If funding is not possible to support this type of engagement, then academic instructors could consider advocating for other concrete ways to benefit community organizations beyond providing

research findings and products. These could include working with community-based, youth-serving organizations to support admission to undergraduate institutions, opportunities for community partners to take or audit courses, pathways to degrees, sharing of research or administrative support to community-based organizations, and access to other institutional resources like libraries and scholarly databases. For example, Reeves (2019) described one unique model that brought together master's students and community stakeholders in co-learning classrooms focused on sustainability²⁴. Other benefits could take the form of a payment as a “placement” fee offered to community organizations that may also take on student interns from the institution. This can be used to cover the costs associated with classroom instruction of university students by staff at that organization. Challenges associated with time can also affect API involvement in these types of courses. In one community-based course, a misalignment between the research needs and progress and the course timeframe required extra efforts on the part of the academic instructor to identify funds to complete the research work when the course ended²³. Additionally, for faculty who are involved with community engagement, support to buy-out course time is necessary to enable them to invest time in building sustainable community partnerships to support this type of co-teaching²³. Institutions that value these types of learning experiences for students should support faculty seeking to engage in this kind of work with protected time or other resources²⁵.

Lesson #4

Finally, with respect to Lesson #4, this learning experience taught us that the emphasis and valuing of academic knowledge in academic spaces like the classroom can manifest in power dynamics that can impact interactions between community partners and students. Thus, students should be trained not just to think about power as it relates to their interactions with community

research participants, but should also be encouraged to think about how it might impact their interactions with their instructors. Various studies have looked at how differences in power can affect co-teaching but mostly in the context of multiple academics co-teaching with each other. In one qualitative study of co-teachers in graduate and undergraduate settings, teachers who taught with others of higher academic rank reported challenges related to navigating course ownership¹³. Notably, in this same study, a less-highly-ranked instructor focused on developing strong relationships with students while deferring to their faculty co-instructor on all the important decisions related to the course¹³. In another study of an undergraduate research methods course co-taught by two professors, they struggled to determine how to balance power in the classroom¹⁴. Students in their classroom also noted these struggles, commenting on uncertainty about who the leader was in the classroom¹⁴. While these examples are exclusively from academic instructor co-taught courses, literature on power and power-sharing in CBPR partnerships and how systems of privilege can advantage and disadvantage individuals in these partnerships¹⁵ suggest the critical importance of considering these same issues within the classroom.

Conclusions

In closing, both instructors believe they benefited from the team-teaching experience. The CPI gained teaching experience while her organization completed research that they lacked the capacity to undertake alone. Through her instructor role, the CPI was also able to highlight challenges faced by immigrant communities and engage in meaningful discussion and teaching opportunities with undergraduate students. The API developed a partnership to support future student opportunities and learned more about the Somerville community and organizational

landscape, while her institution benefited from fulfilling its commitment to promote student engagement in communities and foster strong connections to host communities.

Limitations

There are several limitations to our work. First, the lessons reflect the experience of two female instructors, both of whom are persons of color at a predominantly white, private, liberal arts institution; the findings may not be generalizable to other settings or other instructors. Second, the number of students enrolled in the course in spring 2020 was small, so it was not possible to further deconstruct how student demographic characteristics, such as race or ethnicity, impacted the classroom and community learning environments and instructor-student dynamics. It is not possible to analyze this further or provide details without risking the confidentiality of what occurred in a learning setting.

Future Directions

There are several areas for further exploration. Other instructors could study how more explicit discussions of race, identity, and privilege can impact power structures in the classroom that affect instructor-student relationships. In some cases, it may be relevant to consider the racial and ethnic makeup of the community in which the CBPR is being conducted, particularly if there are asymmetries with the student body. We also recommend assessing student learning that results from a team-teaching model as compared with a single-instructor course. Finally, in retrospect, it would have been interesting to have incorporated student assessments that ask students to reflect on power dynamics observed within the classroom and tensions in CBPR partnerships. In closing, we call for institutions of higher education to specifically explore the benefits and challenges that team-teaching presents in a CBPR course, as well as urge institutions to support these innovative partnerships.

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