HANDS-ON WORK IN THE COMMUNITY

Tutoring Somali Refugees in Springfield

Professor Elliott Fratkin

Community-based learning is an essential aspect of the work that the Center for Community Collaboration supports. Students are able to engage with communities through courses, internships, and research projects in a myriad of academic disciplines. CBL courses combine classroom learning with opportunities to learn through meeting community needs. These courses are taught in many different departments, and work with many different community partners.

This past semester, anthropology professor Elliott Fratkin used his class, *Africa: Peoples, Environment, and Health*, to give his students the valuable experience of engaging with the Somali Refugee community in Springfield. In addition to their traditional class time, the 36 undergraduates enrolled in this course are able to learn on their feet by teaching ESL courses on Sundays. There is a high demand for English courses within that community, and this group of Smith students was able to help meet that need while learning about the anthropology of African communities. Professor Fratkin observes that "this experience has been rewarding for both the Somalis and our students, who are having have face-to-face interactions with members of the refugee communities."

If you would like to learn more about the community-based learning courses being offered at Smith, visit the CBL course page on the CCC website.