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FACULTY INFORMATIONAL GUIDE

TO

ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING

LEARN AND SERVE

Michigan | Campus Compact

INTRODUCTION

The Center for Community-Based Education (CCBE) in the Honors Program at Wayne State University fosters student learning through experiential opportunities in community settings. The mission of the CCBE is to promote and support university participation and commitment to its urban environment. The CCBE provides tangible benefits to communities and unique opportunities for students to apply newly learned skills in a real-world context. The Center draws on university resources to carry expertise and translational research into communities while returning knowledge and experience from the community to the university for the benefit of all.

The CCBE strives to realize its mission by working toward the following goals:

- To prepare students for productive lives in a diverse urban and global environment by involving students in community-based education and civic engagement

- To facilitate faculty integration of research, teaching, and service in ways that highlight community assets and promotes educational goals

- To develop mutually beneficial partnerships between the university and the community to improve the social, economic, and cultural climate of southeastern Michigan

- To build national pre-eminence in community-based education and research through commitments to the Metropolitan Detroit community

WHAT IS SERVICE-LEARNING?

There is no single definition of service-learning that is used in practice. Below are some definitions and descriptions of service-learning intended to provide understanding of the pedagogy.

The Center for Community-Based Education has adopted the Michigan Campus Compact definition of service-learning as the foundation to achieve its mission: Service-learning is a method under which students learn and develop through thoughtfully organized service that: is conducted in and meets the needs of a community and is coordinated with an institution of higher education, and with the community; helps foster civic responsibility; is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students enrolled; and includes structured time for students to reflect on the service experience.

– from the Michigan Campus Compact website

Service-learning is a planned, well developed structured experience in which students use prior knowledge and skills (acquired in the classroom and/or through life experiences) to address a community problem or issue and participate in a structured activity/project to critically analyze the service experience so as to extract learning from it.

Through the service-learning experience, students
  - Enhance classroom learning and the overall educational experience
  - Gain a better understanding of the problem or issue being addressed
  - Develop new ideas for addressing the problem or issue
  - Achieve personal and social growth
  - Gain a greater sense of self
  - Achieve a greater appreciation of the community being served
  - Increase tolerance for sensitivity to diverse populations and cultures
  - Gain an enhanced sense of civic responsibility and a life commitment to community service
    – From the Howard University Center for the Advancement of Service Learning

"Although the terms are sometimes used interchangeably, service-learning and community service are synonymous. Community service may be, and often is, a powerful experience for young people, but community service becomes service-learning when there is a deliberate connection made between service and learning opportunities which are then accompanied by conscious and thoughtfully-designed occasions for reflecting on the service experience."

– Alliance for Service-Learning in Education Reform

"Service-learning is a credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of the course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. Unlike extracurricular volunteer service, service-learning is a course-based service experience that produces the best outcomes when meaningful service activities are related to the material through reflection in activities such as directed writings, small group discussions, and class presentations."

– Bringle & Hatcher, Implementing Service-Learning in Higher Education, 1996

"Service-learning is a method by which students improve academic learning and develop personal skills through structured service projects that meet community needs. Service-learning builds upon students service activities by providing them with opportunities to learn by preparing, leading, and reflecting upon their service experiences."

– Corporation for National Service and Community Service

"Service-learning
* is a method whereby students or participants learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community;
* is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education, or community service program, and with the community;
* helps foster civic responsibility;
* is integrated to and enhances the academic curriculum of the students, or the educational components of the community service program in which the participants are enrolled;
* provides structured time for the students or participants to reflect on the service experience."

– National and Community Service Act of 1990

"… Service-learning is both a program and a philosophy of education. As a program type, service-learning includes myriad ways that students can perform meaningful service to their communities and to society while engaging in some form of reflection or study that is related to the service. As a philosophy of education, service-learning reflects the belief that education must be linked to social responsibility and that the most effective learning is active and connected to experience in some meaningful way."

– Research for Combining Service and Learning in the 1990

"Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities."

– National Service-Learning Clearinghouse

"Service-learning is a form of experiential education where learning occurs through a cycle of action and reflection as students work with others through a process of applying what they are learning to community problems and, at the same time, reflecting upon their experience as they seek to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves."

– *Eyler & Giles, 1999*

WHAT DISTINGUISHES SERVICE-LEARNING?

"Critical reflection is what distinguishes service-learning from others forms of experiential education such as internships, cooperative education, and practicum programs, and from traditional volunteerism. Reflection links the community service experience with course materials, such as readings and lectures.

Reflective tools include:
- Journals
- Small- or large-groups discussions
- Individual or group projects
- Writing portfolios
- In class presentations."

- *The Johnson Foundation, 1989*

ELEMENTS OF THE SERVICE-LEARNING

The service-learning process consists of three major elements - preparation, action, and reflection.

Preparation consists of the learning activities that take place prior to the service itself. During this period, students learn what is expected of them as well as what they can expect from the service activity/project. Preparation activities typically include identifying and analyzing the problem to be addressed; selecting and planning the project; and training and orientation.

Action is the service itself. The service must be meaningful, have academic integrity, provide for student ownership, have adequate supervision, and be developmentally appropriate.

Service may be direct, indirect, or civic in nature.
- Direct Service refers to one's personal involvement in the service activity, such as tutoring, tax preparation, mentoring or a neighborhood clean-up project.
- Indirect service involves directing resources to a problem, for example, a food drive or walk-a-thon.
- Civic service refers to efforts to promote change, such as lobbying, advocacy, or a letter writing campaign.

Reflection enables students to critically analyze and learn from their service experience. Ideally, reflection should take place before, during, and after the service. During post-service reflection, accomplishments can be documented and acknowledged.

Adapted from the Howard University Center for the Advancement of Service-Learning

WHAT IS REFLECTION?

Reflection is a key component of service-learning. Reflection occurs when service participants engage in a thought provoking activity that connects the service experience to learning objectives. Reflection can take place before, during, and after the service.

There is no one prescribed reflective activity. Rather, the reflection assignment should match the ability, composition (?) and "personality" of the student group.

Reflection may involve writing, reading, telling and showing. Some examples of activities that can facilitate the reflection process, while documenting the learning that has occurred from the service experience, are

- Journaling
- Group discussions
- Individual and group presentations, including audio and visual presentations
- Directed writings
- Research papers
- Online discussions
- Service-learning portfolios
- Service logs
- Personal narratives

DEFINITIONS OF REFLECTION

"The critical component of successful service-learning programs is "reflection." Reflection describes the process of deriving meaning and knowledge from experience and occurs before, during, and after a service-learning project. Effective reflection engages both teachers and students in a thoughtful and thought-provoking process that consciously connects learning with experience. It is the use of critical thinking skills to prepare for and learn from service experiences."

- National Service-Learning Clearinghouse

"Community service, in itself, can be meaningful, pointless, or harmful. Reflection is the key to getting meaning from your service experience. What is reflection? It is a process by which service-learners think critically about their experiences. Why is reflection important? Learning happens through a mix of theory and practice, thought and action, observation and interaction. It allows students to learn for themselves."

- Mark Cooper, "The Big Dummy's Guide to Service-Learning"

"Reflection is the internal consideration of an experience in light of particular learning objectives. Reflection should be both retrospective and prospective: students consider the

service experience in order to influence their future action. Effective reflection activities are linked to particular learning objectives of the class, are guided by the instructor, occur regularly throughout the course, allow for feedback and assessment, and include opportunities for the clarification of values. When reflection activities are integrated into class discussion and appear on exams, students report higher levels of satisfaction with the course and greater academic gains from the experience. A service- learning class should include some type of reflection activity that can be evaluated by the instructor. This affords the opportunity to document the learning that has occurred from the service component."

- Indiana Campus Compact

WHY REFLECT?

Reflection allows the service participant to capture the value of the service experience.

BENEFITS OF REFLECTION

- Enhances academic learning
- Promotes personal development
- Provides a greater awareness of a particular community problem or issue
- Develops critical thinking skills
- Gives meaning to the service
- Increases the participants' sensitivity to diversity
- Promotes a sense of accomplishment
- Improves future service

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL REFLECTION SESSION

To be effective, a reflection should
- ✓ be led by an enthusiastic, creative, and nonjudgmental facilitator
- ✓ purposely link the service experience to learning objectives
- ✓ be outcome-based
- ✓ have sufficient time for discussion/writing/presenting to make the activity meaningful
- ✓ be appropriate for the group (age, skill levels, culturally sensitive, etc.)
- ✓ engage all participants
- ✓ be conducted in an environment in which participants feel safe to express their feelings and observations
- ✓ address negative experiences, while highlighting positive experiences.

Adapted from the Howard University Center for the Advancement of Service-Learning

TEN PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE FOR COMBINING SERVICE AND LEARNING

The ten principles that follow have been identified as essential components of good practice. They result from extensive consultation, conducted by the National Society for Internships and Experiential Education (now known as National Society for Experiential Education), with more than 70 organizations interested in service and learning. A small advisory group met at Wingspread in May 1989 to compose the language of the ten principles. These principles continue to be relevant and are widely utilized today.

1. An effective program engages people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good.

2. An effective program provides structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience.

3. An effective program articulates clear service and learning goals for everyone involved.

4. An effective program allows for those with needs to define those needs.

5. An effective program clarifies the responsibilities of each person and organization involved.

6. An effective program matches service providers and service needs through a process that recognizes changing circumstances.

7. An effective program expects genuine, active, and sustained organizational commitment.

8. An effective program includes training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition, and evaluation to meet service-learning goals.

9. An effective program insures that the time commitment for service and learning is flexible, appropriate, and in the best interests of all involved.

10. An effective program is a committed to program participation by and with diverse populations.

Source: Principles of Good Practice for Combining Service and Learning: A Wingspread Special Report, Porter Honnet, Ellen and Susan J. Poulsen, 1996.

Characteristics of Community-Based Courses That Predict Student Learning

Community-based learning is most effective when students have at least 15-20 hours of community experience, have frequent contact with community members, engage in weekly in-class reflection, write ongoing and summative reflections and engage in discussions about their experiences with both instructors and site supervisors.

1. *Placement Quality*
   The community placement offers resources and opportunities for student learning, as well as competent supervision on site. The community provides a context where students can exercise initiative, take responsibility, and work as peers with practitioners and community members.

2. *Application*
   There is a strong and obvious connection between what students are doing in class and what they are experiencing in the community, and vice versa. *Application* is the strongest predictor of increases in students' problem solving abilities, critical thinking, and changes in their perspectives on social issues.

3. *Reflection*
   Students are given regular opportunities to step back and reflect on the community experience, to monitor their reactions and thinking processes, and to connect their experiences with academic learning. Reflection occurs in both class discussions and writing assignments. *Reflection* is a modest but significant predictor of almost all of the learning outcomes examined in the literature (personal and interpersonal learning, understanding and applying knowledge, engagement and curiosity, critical thinking, and transformation of perspective).

4. *Diversity*
   Students have an opportunity to work with people from diverse backgrounds in terms of age, ethnicity, income levels, religious beliefs, etc. *Diversity* predicts increased levels of tolerance and transformation in students' perspectives on social issues.

5. *Community Voice*
    Community members have identified the needs that students are helping to address throughout the semester. *Community voice* is a high predictor of students' personal development, including increased tolerance, cultural appreciation, valuing service careers, and feeling connected to community members.

Students who are or have been involved in previous volunteer work tend to report more learning in community-based courses than non-volunteers. For all students, receiving quality feedback on their community work from professors and/or community members has a significant impact on their self-reported learning, use of skills taught in the course, and commitment to service.

Adapted from several documented sources.

BENEFITS OF SERVICE LEARNING

BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

Service-learning…
- Makes learning more useful and relevant.
- Promotes active learning.
- Extends the boundaries of the classroom to metropolitan Detroit.
- Heightens awareness of community needs.
- Provides real-life application of what students are learning in the classroom.
- Provides an opportunity for students to learn about and give back to the community.
- Enhances sensitivity to diversity.
- Strengthens critical thinking skills and communication skills.
- Promotes personal and social growth.
- Stimulates intellectual and leadership development.
- Fosters a sense of civic responsibility.
- Allows for integration and synthesis of knowledge.
- Helps prepare students for the world of work.
- Allows students to serve as involved citizens in their communities.
- Facilitates the development of a lifelong commitment to service.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Student service…
- Helps meet unmet community needs.
- Exposes and teaches communities about emerging generations of students.
- Helps establish access and connections to other resources available at Wayne State University and through Wayne State University.
- Helps breakdown and dispel myths and stereotypes that the community has about students and Wayne State University.
- Adds youth and enthusiasm to a service program or project.
- Provides an opportunity for a community to shape students' values and to prepare students for community involvement after college.

BENEFITS TO WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

Service-learning…

- Supplements the educational experience being provided by the University.
- Allows WSU to give back to the community through its students, faculty, and staff.
- Provides good public relations.
- Provides an opportunity for the community to view the University as a resource.
- Helps establish connections for other University programs.

Adapted from the Howard University Center for the Advancement of Service-Learning

EXAMPLES OF SERVICE-LEARNING FOR ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

ACCOUNTING, FINANCE
Students can help local organizations maximize their financial processes, prepare taxes, perform audits, etc.

BUSINESS
Students can create business and/or strategic plans for small organizations to aid in fund search, business growth, improved service capacity, etc.

EDUCATION
Students can work with Detroit Public Schools in different capacities (depending on the subject area of the class) to enhance their preparation for potential teaching in a metropolitan city.

ENGLISH, MARKETING
Students can develop their writing ability by preparing marketing materials for community-based organizations.

FASHION DESIGN
Students can design and construct clothing for (1) various local organizations, shelters, etc; (2) costumes for local schools theater departments; uniforms for children of DPS that have a need.

FOREIGN LANGUAGE
Students can tutor young people in English while strengthening their language and cultural learning.

MECHANICAL ENGINEERING
Students can design and create a playground for a community organization.

NURSING, BIOLOGY,
Students can provide research and practical services to community organizations to learn about human growth and development, the influence of people's environment on their health, etc. Students can assist in local medical health fairs providing services on behalf of the organization.

PSYCHOLOGY
Students can serve at local agencies as a way to learn about community-based methods for empowering families and communities.

PUBLIC HEALTH
Students work with community-based organizations and public health agencies to develop health education workshops and informational fairs.

SOCIOLOGY

Students can learn and put to use sociological theories and concepts while serving special populations through local organizations.

WOMEN'S STUDIES

Students can work at agencies that serve women in many capacities while studying women's roles in the organizations and service population.

Adapted from The Ginsberg Center, University of Michigan

FACULTY SERVICE-LEARNING CHALLENGES AND TIPS FOR MAKING IT WORK

CHALLENGES	TIPS
Student resistance	– Demonstrate your commitment to service-learning and the project (e.g. serve alongside students, visit site, make service-learning a course requirement) – Connect the service to learning objectives
Lack of department and/or institutional support	– Actively seek departmental and institutional support (e.g. make service-learning presentations at faculty or departmental meetings, speak at Brown Bags, showcase students' accomplishments) – Recruit institutional and external supporters to lobby key administrators – Enlist the help the Center for Community-Based Education
Lack of time to plan or prepare the course	– Begin planning the class at least one semester before the course is offered – Enlist help of the Center for Community-Based Education – Involve community partners in planning – Avoid making service-learning an added burden
Financial Restraints	– Seek external and institutional grants (e.g. service-learning mini-grants, federal funding, foundation grants) – Request support from a community partner (e.g. cost-share match)

FACULTY SERVICE-LEARNING CHALLENGES AND TIPS FOR MAKING IT WORK

CHALLENGES	TIPS
Poor Student Performance at Site	– Ensure that all parties understand their roles and responsibilities – Conduct mandatory orientations trainings – Provide release time from class for planning, travel, and service – Obtain feedback/evaluations from site supervisor regarding student performance
Poor site supervision	– Ensure that all parties understand their roles and responsibilities – Request that the site assign someone to guide and monitor students at the site – Maintain an open line of communication with site supervisor – Conduct site visits

GLOSSARY OF SERVICE-LEARNING TERMS

ACTION RESEARCH
In its simplest form, action research is a way of generating research about a social system while simultaneously attempting to change that system. While conventional social science aims at producing knowledge about social systems (some of which may eventually prove useful to those wishing to effect change), action research seeks both to understand and to alter the problems generated by social systems.

ASSESSMENT
The process of gathering information in order to make an evaluation. An evaluation is a decision or judgment about whether an effort is successful and to what extent that effort has or has not met a goal. Evaluation of effects of service-learning on students who take classes that employ service-learning as pedagogy, on the community partner or agency that delivers services students assist with, on faculty members who teach those courses, and on the institution under whose auspices service-learning course are offered. Assessment may be descriptive or evaluative; involve conventional Likert-type items or narrative reports; and be directed toward above-named stakeholders.

CAMPUS COMPACT
A national coalition of more than 650 college and university presidents committed to increasing the number of service programs on higher education campuses across the state. At the national level, work promotes public and community service, development of resource materials, workshops and institutions, and support for 22 state offices and the National Center for Community Colleges.

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY
The commitment of a citizen to his or her community to take responsibility for the well-being of the community. Service-learning and community engagement are often cited as developing students' civic responsibility.

CO-CURRICULAR
Signifies community service that is not explicitly connected to an academic course.

COMMUNITY
Community can be used in a number of ways to apply to almost any groups of individuals. It is often use to describe a geographic group whose members engage in some face-to-face interaction. The term community can also be used in a more meaningful sense to emphasize the common bonds and beliefs that hold people together.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Community members working together to achieve long-term benefits for the community and an overall stronger sense of community.

Effective development has four important characteristics:
1. It is predicated upon the importance of social and economic institutions in the lives of community members.
2. It is planned and achieved with representation, input, and guidance from a cross section of community members.
3. It builds efficient, self-sustaining, locally controlled initiatives to address social and economic issues in the community.
4. It promotes the economic self-reliance of community members and of the community as a whole

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A central value affirmed by the service-learning movement. Colleges, universities, and community colleges cooperate with nonprofit agencies, government agencies, faith-based organizations, and individuals to improve the community in which the institution resides. Service-learning, faculty participation, and students represent community engagement. This ethic of service affirms the responsibility of educational institutions to bring their resources to impact gaps in community services.

COMMUNITY PARTNER

The agency that acts as a conduit for bringing resources to the community, e.g. government, nonprofit agency, or faith-based agency, bringing needed services to the community via existing distribution channels while taking responsibility for students work. Often a community partner identifies community needs and utilizes its existing infrastructure for project implementation.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community service is volunteerism that occurs in the community – action taken to meet the needs of others and better the community as a whole. Programs of all types, like scouts, schools or YMCAs, often perform the "community service."

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Emotionally engaged learning in which the learner experiences a visceral connection to the subject matter. Good experiential learning combines direct experience that is meaningful to the student with guided reflection and analysis. It is a challenging, active, student-centered process that impels students towards opportunities for taking initiative, responsibility, and decision making.

PEDAGOGY

The study of the teaching and learning process; service-learning provides a method that informs and enhances the teaching and learning process.

RECIPROCITY

A central component in service-learning and community engagement that suggest that every individual, organization, and entity involved in service-learning functions as both a teacher and a learner.

REFLECTION

A critical component of service-learning. Reflection describes the process of deriving meaning and knowledge from experience and occurs before, during, and after a service-learning project. Effective reflection engages both teachers and students in a thoughtful and thought provoking process that consciously connects learning with experience. It is the use of critical thinking skills to prepare for and learn from service experiences.

STUDENT OWNERSHIP

At the very heart of the youth service movement is the notion that students can make important contributions to their schools and communities. Such philosophy requires a strong student-centered approach, where young people identify problems, brainstorm, implement solutions and evaluate their projects, while their teacher takes the role of the facilitator.

VOLUNTEERISM

The performance of formal service to benefit others or one's community without receiving any external rewards; such programs may or may not involve structured training and reflection.

Adapted from the National Service Learning Clearinghouse Glossary of Service-Learning Terms

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