

COMMUNITY GUIDEBOOK



The Service Learning Program at
College of DuPage

A Guide for Community Organizations Working with
College of DuPage Service Learning Students

College of DuPage

Service Learning Program

The Service Learning program at College of DuPage is located on the college's east campus in the Careers Services Center, Student Resource Center (SRC), Room 1490.

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“Wants and needs. Learning helps us reach what we want. Service helps us, and those we serve, gain what we need. Join College of DuPage in strengthening our students and our community through service learning.”

-- Sunil Chand, President, College of DuPage

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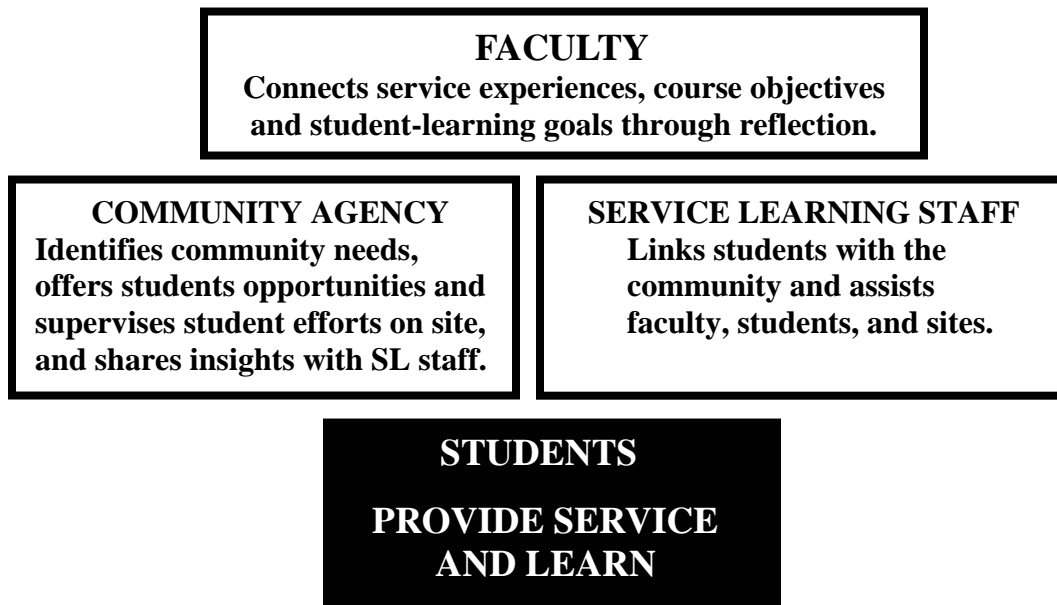


WHY SERVICE LEARNING?

Service learning is receiving unprecedented recognition for its value to students, higher education and the community. Service learning programs include four main components: the college instructor, the student, the community partner and the service learning program staff. The partnership and collaboration between community placement sites and College of DuPage is critical to successful service learning.

This guidebook is about understanding and developing this critical partnership. While entering into this partnership requires a commitment of time, resources and effort on your part, the resulting benefits for your agency, clients, service learning students and our communities can be dramatic and transformational. Please approach this guidebook as a step in the process of being or becoming a service learning partner/placement site.

All service learning projects are composed of the following:



THE SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM AT COLLEGE OF DUPAGE

“Connecting Classroom and Community”

What is Service Learning?

Service learning is a method of instruction that provides an opportunity for students to merge classroom learning and civic engagement. In this relationship between campus and community, there is no servant/recipient relationship – both are colleagues, learning from and growing with each other.

Service learning is not a course add-on. Classes are carefully constructed and organized to include a service opportunity for students that is combined with a classroom-based means of critical thinking and reflection. This mode of reflection can take various forms and is a vital component of the service learning teaching methodology.

Who We Are and What We Do

The Service Learning program at College of DuPage was established in 2000 with a three-year grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service. It was created to encourage and facilitate the implementation of the teaching methodology into classes at College of DuPage.

We serve as the focal point for providing classroom-based community service opportunities for our students. We help students find organizations whose missions are directly related to the learning objectives a student has developed with the assistance of an instructor. We assist faculty members with organizing their classes to include service learning a part of the curriculum. Additionally, we provide ideas for group and individual subject-related service projects. We provide the community with eager, open minds and student partners who are willing to step in and become involved in the mission and function of the organization.

BENEFITS OF SERVICE LEARNING*

- Students are more likely to finish college.
- Students are more likely to enroll in post-graduate study.
- Students are more culturally aware and likely to socialize across racial/ethnic lines.
- Students are more likely to participate in community action programs.
- Students are more likely to participate in programs to help clean up the environment.
- Students are more likely to develop a meaningful philosophy of life.

***Taken from study done by Astin.**

EXAMPLES OF SERVICE LEARNING PROJECTS

ANTHROPOLOGY

"Biomedical Science and Human Adaptability"- University of Pennsylvania.

Community health is viewed as the interaction between biological, environmental and sociocultural factors. The focus of the course is the design, implementation and dissemination of an evaluation of the growth status of children attending an opportunity school.

ART

"A Day Without Art"- Yale University.

Students from the Yale School of Art designed and executed a one-day fundraising and advocacy event in the fall semester around the issue of AIDS. The event included student created remembrances of artists who have died of AIDS-related causes, readings, performances and exhibitions were put on.

Another project includes murals that are designed and created by students to beautify public schools, grades K through 12, which are artistically uninspired. Ideas for the murals are proposed by the students at the schools themselves and then artists from Florida International University create a mural based these ideas.

BIOLOGY

Conduct workshops at elderly resident homes on "What's Happening to My Body." In this way, students will learn about the particular nutritional needs of the elderly and physical changes they are going through.

POLITICAL SCIENCE

At San Diego State University, political science majors take a course that requires them to undertake training in community mediation skills and to work afterward in the city's community dispute mediation center. Through a concurrent seminar, students explore their experience for applications and testing political science theories relation to conflict and compromise.

Another example of a student-learning project includes students working with senior citizens' groups to lobby for legislation to meet older people's needs or the needs of another population or interest group. Grassroots organizing techniques are also stressed.

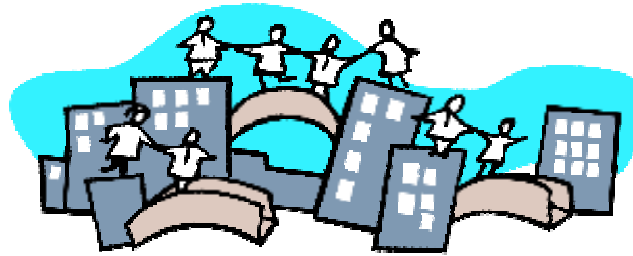
An additional project might include an examination of the micro-political structures of condominiums, with students applying ideas learned during their "field work" to larger macro-political structures studied in class.

Students could also pursue work as a mediator or secretary for a neighborhood advisory board, using their experiences to round-out in-class instruction.

You may view this article in its entirety on Florida International University's

Volunteer Action web site:

www.fiu.edu/~time4chg/Library/ideas.html



“Giving helps the giver as much as those to whom the gift goes. It broadens the vision, an enlarges life. It cultivates love, sympathy, and kindness. It develops nobility of character and generosity of conduct.”

-- Unknown

IMPORTANT TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

VOLUNTEERISM: The engagement in activities where the primary emphasis is on the service provided and the primary intended beneficiary is the service recipient.

COMMUNITY SERVICE: The engagement in activities that primarily focus on the service being provided as well as the benefits the service activities have on recipients. The providers also receive benefits by learning more about how their service makes a difference in the lives of the service recipients.

INTERNSHIPS: These programs engage students in service activities primarily for the purpose of providing them with hands-on experiences that enhance their learning or understanding relevant to a particular area of study.

FIELD EDUCATION: These programs provide students with co-curricular opportunities that are related, but not fully integrated, with their formal academic studies. Students perform the service as part of a program that is designed primarily to enhance their understanding of a field study, while also providing substantial emphasis on the service being provided.

SERVICE LEARNING: Service learning programs are distinguished from other approaches to experiential education by their intention to equally benefit the provider and the recipient of the service, as well as to ensure equal focus on both the service being provided and the learning that occurs.

Furco, Andrew. January, 1996. *Service learning: A Balanced Approach to Experiential Education.*



FIRST STEPS

Will service learning be a required or optional component of my course?

Offering service learning as an alternative to a course assignment, for example a research paper, is a great way to offer students some flexibility in molding the course to suit their needs. On the other hands, offering service learning as a required component is a great way for the class to experience a new way of learning as a group. Additionally, if everyone has a service learning project then the reflective component is more easily incorporated into class time as discussion, and/or into the syllabus as a writing assignment.

Must I require students to complete 10 or 20 hours of service?

While the C.O.D. Service Learning program requires students to complete at least 10 hours of service to receive a Certificate of Completion, many instructors have indicated that 20 hours offers better insight and understanding to the people, group or social issue students address. In making this decision, please consider the following: If the service learning project is in place of another project, how much time would a student be expected to invest in the other project? For example, 20 hours of service might be more appropriate if the service project is in place of a research paper, while 10 hours might be more appropriate if the service project is in place of one of three essays required for the course.

Where will my students perform their service?

In choosing a service learning site(s), you have a number of options: 1) Your class can work as a group with one site that directly links the course material with the mission of the community partner. Dr. Holly Hubert uses this method with her Education 100 students by collaborating with Mariela Soejarto of the Villa Park Neighborhood Resource Center and has had great success in working with a single site. 2) Your class may also choose to work with a handful of sites whose purpose directly links with your course objectives. Edith Jaco, a service learning Spanish instructor, has had great success working with a number of our sites in need of Spanish- speaking students. From after-school programs to pregnancy service centers, the Spanish students are able to utilize their Spanish skills while giving back to the community and learning more about another culture. 3) Lastly, your class may wish to select a service site on an individual basis. The CSL has an extensive list of sites with whom our students have worked with in the past. Each student in your class may arrange to do their service project at a site of their choosing.

While the Service Learning program at C.O.D. does not insist upon any method, we have found that instructors using the 1st or 2nd options have had greater success, since learning objectives tend to be more cohesive, and it easier to have a group discussion about experiences and learning adventures in class when the sites are narrowly tailored to course needs, as in the case of Dr. Hubert and Senora Jaco.

What type of “reflection” do I want my students to engage in?

The reflective piece of the service learning program offers students an opportunity to think critically about their experiences and make links between their community experience, course material and learning objectives. The reflective piece can take many different forms, a few of which include class discussion, journaling, reflective essays, e-discussion boards and one-on-one meetings. The best method is whatever form is most appropriate for your course. Robb Frank, a service learning humanities professor, requires his students to journal after each service experience. Others, like Charles Ellenbaum, a service learning anthropology professor, requires students to turn in a reflective essay at the end of the course. Whichever way you choose, please keep in mind that it is important for students to be reflect and think critically throughout the project.



BUILDING YOUR SERVICE LEARNING COMPONENT

1. **Consider the courses you teach** and how you will link service learning activities to specific learning outcomes.
2. **Contact service learning staff members** to discuss community placement sites that offer service experiences that are relevant to your course and address an identified community need. Choose the service opportunities that best fit your curriculum.
3. **Decide how the service activity will be structured.** Service learning is best when it connects students directly with individuals in the community. Students take what they are learning in the classroom and help service an identified community need. The recommended amount of time for students to donate is 10 to 20 hours per quarter. The service component can be optional or required. Either way, the service component is in place of, or a trade-off, for other assigned coursework. The community becomes an extension of the classroom.
4. **Review course objectives.** Determine which objective(s) will be linked to service. List specific and measurable service and learning objectives for your initiative. Service learning outcomes must be evaluated in the same way as any other academic product. Students are graded on learning outcomes and academic achievement, not on their hours of service.
5. **Alter your course syllabus,** indicating that the service learning component is integrated into the course and helps to fulfill one or more of the course goals. Students require assistance to establish learning objectives which they write on their information sheet and placement confirmation sheet.
6. **Explain the service learning component to students** at the beginning of the quarter. Identify which placement sites students can use. Plan to schedule an introductory presentation with a service learning staff member to review student forms, deadlines, the site list, etc. CSL staff members are also available to meet with students on an individual basis to assist with site selection, as needed.
7. **Help students to reflect** on the connection between their service and the course content. Reflection occurs through journaling, presentations, additional reading and discussions, which help students tie together lessons learned from the placement site opportunities, class learning and life learning.

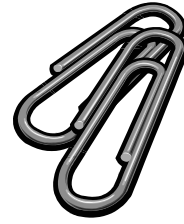
PRINCIPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN COMBINING SERVICE AND LEARNING*

The C.O.D. Service Learning program has identified the following principles as essential components that should guide all successful service learning programs:

An effective service learning program:

- 1) Engages people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good.**
- 2) Provides structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience.**
- 3) Articulates clear service and learning goals for everyone involved. From the outset of the project, participants and service recipients alike must have a clear sense of what is to be accomplished and what is to be learned.**
- 4) Allows for those with needs to define those needs.**
- 5) Clarifies the responsibilities of each person and organization involved.**
- 6) Matches service providers and service needs through a process that recognizes changing circumstances.**
- 7) Expectes genuine, active and sustained organizational commitment.**
- 8) Includes training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition and evaluation to meet service and learning goals.**
- 9) Ensures that the time commitment for service and learning is flexible, appropriate and in the best interests of all involved.**
- 10) Is committed to program participation by and with diverse populations.**

****From the Wingspread Special Report (1989)***



ATTACHMENTS

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Service Learning Component Development Worksheet

Service Learning Presentation Request Form

Starting a Service Learning Project

Site List

Student Forms Packet

Instruction sheet

Form A: Pre-survey

Form B: Placement Confirmation

Form C: Service Learning Hours Log

Form D: Post-survey

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