



SERVICE LEARNING

Service Learning Faculty Handbook

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What is Service Learning?

Service learning incorporates community work into the curriculum, giving students real-world learning experiences that enhance their academic learning while providing a tangible benefit for the community.

—Campus Compact (Compact.org)

CSUSM Academic Senate considers a course to be Service Learning if

- the service relates to the academic learning objectives of the course
- the service is tied to academic content through reflection
- accounts for no less than 15% of the course grade

Service Learning focuses on both the needs of the community partner and the course learning objectives.

How Do Students Benefit from Service Learning?

Learning outcomes—deeper understanding of course material, positive impact on student engagement, retention, and graduation rates

Personal outcomes—enhances leadership, collaboration, communication skills

Social outcomes—appreciation of diversity, cultural competence, empathy, civic engagement

“Although SL students and non-SL students had similar pre-college academic characteristics, **SL students were more successful while enrolled in college. They earned more credits, had a higher average college GPA, and they graduated at a significantly higher rate than did non-SL students, despite having greater financial need while enrolled.**”

—The Relationship between Service-Learning and Degree Completion, Lockeman, Kelly S.; Pelco, Lynn E., Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, v20 n1 p18-30 Fall 2013

How Can I Include Service in my Course?

1. Plan your course

- Consider what type of service you want and how that service will be tied to course learning objectives (see examples below).
- Determine whether the Service Learning will be **required** or **optional** for your course. If it is optional, what additional assignments/exams will students need to complete if they do not choose Service Learning? (Make sure the two options are roughly equivalent in terms of effort.)
- How many Service Learning hours will you require, not including onboarding/orientation? (We recommend at least 15-20 per semester.)
- How will you keep track of student hours? Some sites track student hours. For those that do not, we have a **timesheet** on our [website](#) that you can ask students to complete and have signed by their site supervisor.

- If you are adding Service Learning to a class you have taught before, what assignments will you remove from your syllabus to “make room” for Service Learning and reflection assignments?
- Consider how the Service Objectives (goals of your community partner) support your course Learning Objectives.

Service Learning Examples and Learning Objectives	
From Loyola University, <i>Community Engaged Learning, Teaching and Scholarship</i> http://www.loyno.edu/engage/service-learning-examples	
Students in a biology class plant trees and grasses in wetland areas with a conservation group.	<u>Learning objectives</u> : knowledge of ecosystems, biodiversity, coastal erosion, plant life cycles, environmental degradation
	<u>Service objectives</u> : mitigation of wetland loss, habitat preservation, storm protection
Students in an accounting class develop a presentation on business credit and deliver the presentation at a client gathering at a local small business incubator.	<u>Learning objectives</u> : knowledge of nonprofit careers for business/accounting majors, accounting and financial processes involved in starting and sustaining small businesses
	<u>Service objectives</u> : economic development, job creation
Students in a sociology class tutor children and adolescents in local schools and afterschool programs.	<u>Learning objectives</u> : knowledge of how race and class affect child/adolescent development, socialization and behavior
	<u>Service objectives</u> : increased academic achievement, higher school performance
Students in an introductory chemistry seminar prepare exciting, age-appropriate, hands-on chemistry demonstrations for students in a local public school.	<u>Learning objectives</u> : improving students' science communication skills to general audiences, preparation for future conference presentations
	<u>Service objectives</u> : stimulating interest in STEM fields, building scientific imagination and creativity among school-aged children
Students in a composition class serve food and socialize with guests at a local homeless	<u>Learning objectives</u> : analysis and observation of the causes and effects of homelessness, improving listening and critical inquiry skills

<p>shelter. They use their experience to compose a well-argued essay on the causes of homelessness and possible solutions.</p>	<p><u>Service objectives</u>: care for homeless individuals, support for shelters, developing effective advocates for solutions to homelessness</p>
<p>Students in a marketing class devise strategies to help a national affordable housing organization incorporate its local community-building efforts into its larger brand identity.</p>	<p><u>Learning objectives</u>: knowledge of branding strategies, effective use of social and traditional media</p>
	<p><u>Service objectives</u>: increased awareness of neighborhood affordable housing and community-building resources</p>
<p>Students in an acting class volunteer in a variety of community-based settings, closely observing accent, vocal posture, and gesture among the people they serve.</p>	<p><u>Learning goals</u>: strengthening voice & movement techniques, developing believable and authentic characters.</p>
	<p><u>Service goals</u>: building relationships, listening and communication skills, and solidarity between students and community members</p>
<p>Students in a public relations class create a campaign for a local organ and tissue procurement organization.</p>	<p><u>Learning objectives</u>: Practicing writing, presentation and research skills, applying public relations theories and concepts</p>
	<p><u>Service objectives</u>: Increasing registered organ and tissue donors among college-aged youth; building awareness and support among young people for organ and tissue donation</p>

Creating Learning Objectives

Source: <http://www.loyno.edu/engage/learning-objectives>

Learning objectives can be formulated as statements: "Students will [X]." Service learning objectives can be formulated as: "Students will [X] by doing [Y]."

LEARNING OBJECTIVE	SERVICE LEARNING OBJECTIVE
Intended outcome (knowledge, skill, proficiency, awareness)	Intended outcome + service activity as means
What will students learn?	What will students learn and how is the service activity a way to learn this?
"Students will [X]."	"Students will [X] by doing [Y]."

Examples of service learning objectives

OBJECTIVE (intended outcome): Students will examine the strengths and weaknesses of educational policy arguments **BY (means)** tutoring in local public schools.

OBJECTIVE (intended outcome): Students will observe, understand and be able to reproduce various accents prevalent throughout the New Orleans community **BY (means)** conversing and forming relationships with New Orleanians in authentic community-based contexts.

OBJECTIVE (intended outcome): Students will gain an introductory knowledge of the various forms of forensic evidence **BY (means)** examining post-conviction criminal files for compelling forensic lacunae.

OBJECTIVE (intended outcome): Students will learn to communicate scientific topics to a general audience **BY (means)** developing and presenting an exciting, hands-on science demonstrations to fifth-graders.

OBJECTIVE (intended outcome): Students will be able to provide examples of the principles of behavioral psychology **BY (means)** interacting with individuals in authentic community-based contexts throughout New Orleans.

OBJECTIVE (intended outcome): Students will understand risk factors for HIV infection in a community **BY (means)** serving at HIV prevention and education programs and residences for those living with HIV and AIDS.

OBJECTIVE (intended outcome): Students will learn how to create an advertising campaign **BY (means)** learning about the mission of and the needs of a non-profit client.

2. Find Community Partners

Begin making connections with community partners 1-2 months before the start of the semester. Keep in mind that you may need to contact 15-20 sites to end up with a list of 5-10 partners that offer projects aligned with your course learning objectives. Use a spreadsheet or notebook to keep track of whom you have contacted and their response.

- Search for community partners in our Service Learning Database: <https://app.calstates4.com/csusm/sites>
 - Under **Program**, choose Service Learning.
 - You can narrow your search by **Organization type** (education, healthcare, etc.), **City**, or **Keyword**.
 - Read the description of various organizations and click on their websites to learn more.
 - If your desired Community Partner is not currently listed in our database, you can add them using this quick link: <https://www.csusm.edu/servicelearning/faculty/requestcommunitypartnerforfaculty.html>
- If a community partner looks promising, email/phone them using the contact information in the database. Inquire about the projects they envision for your students and the requirements for working there. (Sites that require extensive training or a 6-month commitment, for example, may not be practical for your students.)

Sample first contact email

Dear _____,

My name is Professor _____ and I am looking for Service Learning opportunities for my students for _____ semester.

I am planning to include a XX-hour Service Learning component in my _____ class. Because my course focuses on _____, I would like students to get hands-on experience with _____. (Explain why you see them as a potential match for your course.)

Would your organization have projects that my students could help with? If so, please give me an idea of the work they would do and how many students you could use.

I look forward to hearing from you.

- Consider the number of students in your class(es) and partner with enough organizations to offer all your students a spot. Keep in mind that students will have limited time in their schedules and may not want to travel long distances, so offer a variety of locations and options.
- To accommodate students with limited transportation and undocumented students, consider including a few on-campus organizations among your sites (type CSUSM in the database under **Site name**).

3. Designate your Course as Service Learning

Courses can be designated by your Administrative Coordinator as “Service Learning” when the course is initially created. Faculty may also self-designate their course as Service Learning by completing this brief online form: <https://www.csusm.edu/servicelearning/sldesignationreq.html>

4. Link Service to Learning Objectives Through Reflection Activities

- Community service by itself does not guarantee that learning objectives are met. Reflection activities serve as an essential bridge between service and course concepts. The process of reflection should be **ongoing** throughout the semester, and reflection topics should challenge students to examine new learnings along with changes in their perspective.
- Reflections can take many forms: essays, in-class discussions, journals, presentations, theory application papers, case studies, videos, letters to the editor, multimedia brochures, blogs, etc. Here is a useful [Service Learning Reflection Toolkit](#) compiled by Miami Dade College.
- Design your reflection activities to guide students through the process of making critical connections between their community service experiences and course topics. According to the University of Minnesota Center for Community-Engaged Learning,

As students participate in a service-learning class and do the related community work, they should ask themselves these questions: What? So What? Now What? The reflection process begins with a defining and sharing of the "What" of the student's experience, and follows a continuous cycle towards "So What?" and "Now What?"

–What? Report the facts and events of an experience, objectively.

–So What? Analyze the experience in light of course topics.

–Now What? Consider the future impact of the experience on you and the community.

(<http://www.servicelearning.umn.edu/info/reflection.html>)

- Create a **rubric** to guide reflection responses and offer feedback. See Appendix 1 for a sample reflection rubric.

5. Orient Students at the Start of the Semester

- Invite a representative from the Office of Internships and Service Learning to your class to help students understand how to navigate the database and how to apply for opportunities with community partners.

Request a classroom presentation at this link:

<https://www.csusm.edu/servicelearning/classroompresentation.html>

- If possible, invite representatives from your chosen community partners to your class. (Our office can provide parking passes.) Ask them to briefly describe their organization, the work the students would do there, and how students can apply.
- Once students have found an appropriate community partner (and received confirmation from that community partner that there is a spot for them), students must return to the [Service Learning database](#) and **make their official placement at that site by completing a few brief online forms.**

NOTE: CSU POLICY REQUIRES THAT STUDENTS COMPLETE THESE PLACEMENT FORMS BY MID-SEMESTER TO AVOID HAVING A HOLD PLACED ON THEIR STUDENT ACCOUNT. STUDENTS CAN FIND

DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS ON OUR [website](#). WE ARE ALSO HAPPY TO MEET WITH STUDENTS INDIVIDUALLY OR COME TO YOUR CLASS TO ASSIST WITH THIS.

- Include course activities that promote cultural sensitivity and awareness of what Campus Compact describes as “intercultural communication, competency, self-understanding, and comprehension of positionality in respect to power and privilege.” Here is a collection of useful activities from Campus Compact: <https://compact.org/global-sl/toolsandsyllabi/reflection-intercultural-border-crossing-power-and-privilege/>

6. Wrapping up—How Did It Go?

- We love hearing student success stories, so please share those with us. You can even nominate one of your students for our annual **Outstanding Service Learning Student Award**.
- We also want to hear about problems or concerns we can assist with. Share those as well.

Useful links:

- **Campus Compact** has a resource page with [sample Service Learning Syllabi](#) in all disciplines and other [Resources for Faculty](#).
- [Components of an effective SL syllabus](#) from Loyola University, New Orleans
- Activities to promote [cultural awareness](#) from Campus Compact.
- [Service Learning Reflection Toolkit](#) compiled by Miami Dade College.
- [Reflection ideas](#) from Loyola University New Orleans.
- [The Four C’s of Reflection](#)
- [Faculty Toolkit for Service Learning](#) by Pepperdine University

Appendix 1: Sample Service-Learning Reflection Rubric

Question / points	4	3	2	1	0
A. What did you learn in your course (and other courses, if applicable) that relates to your service or community site? What did you learn during your service or at your community site that relates to your course?	Skillfully conveys perspectives from the course (and other courses, if applicable) and the community partner site with respect to an audience.	Adequately conveys perspectives from the course (and other courses, if applicable) and the community partner site with some respect to an audience.	Conveys ideas and facts from the course (and other courses, if applicable) and the community partner site that may be related but doesn't explicitly explain their relationship. Demonstrates minimal attention to an audience.	Conveys ideas and facts from the course and community partner site that don't seem to be related. Demonstrates little attention to an audience.	Does not meet level one performance.
B. What problem(s) did you help solve, enhancing our community? How did you accomplish this?	Skillfully explains the problem(s), his/her intervention, his/her process learned from the course and community partner site (decisions, thinking, info literacy, reasoning), and the positive effects of that intervention.	Adequately explains the problem(s), his/her intervention, his/her process learned from the course and community partner site (decisions, thinking, info literacy, reasoning), and the positive effects of that intervention.	Explains most of these: the problem(s), his/her intervention, his/her process learned from the course and community partner site (decisions, thinking, info literacy, reasoning), and the positive effects of that intervention.	Explains some of these: the problem(s), his/her intervention, his/her process learned from the course and community partner site (decisions, thinking, info literacy, reasoning), and the positive effects of that intervention.	Does not meet level one performance.
C. How has your experience affected your thinking about the community, its problems, and the solutions to those problems?	Skillfully explains changes in thinking about the community, its problems, and the solutions to those problems as a result of the service-learning experience (and other related experiences).	Adequately explains changes in thinking about the community, its problems, and the solutions to those problems as a result of the service-learning experience (and other related experiences).	Explains changes in thinking about most of these: the community, its problems, and the solutions to those problems as a result of the service-learning experience (and other related experiences).	Explains changes in thinking about some of these: its problems, and the solutions to those problems as a result of the service-learning experience (and other related experiences).	Does not meet level one performance.
D. What personal, academic or career goals did you achieve? How has your experience affected your thinking about personal, academic or career goals? How will you serve the community in the future?	Skillfully explains what personal, academic or career goals were accomplished, how the student was changed, and what future service the student plans as a result of the service-learning experience.	Adequately explains what personal, academic or career goals were accomplished, how the student was changed, and what future service the student plans as a result of the service-learning experience.	Explains most of these: personal, academic or career goals that were accomplished, how the student was changed, and what future service the student plans as a result of the service-learning experience.	Explains some of these: personal, academic or career goals that were accomplished, how the student was changed, and what future service the student plans as a result of the service-learning experience.	Does not meet level one performance.

Source: Kapi'olani Community College, University of Hawai'i.