

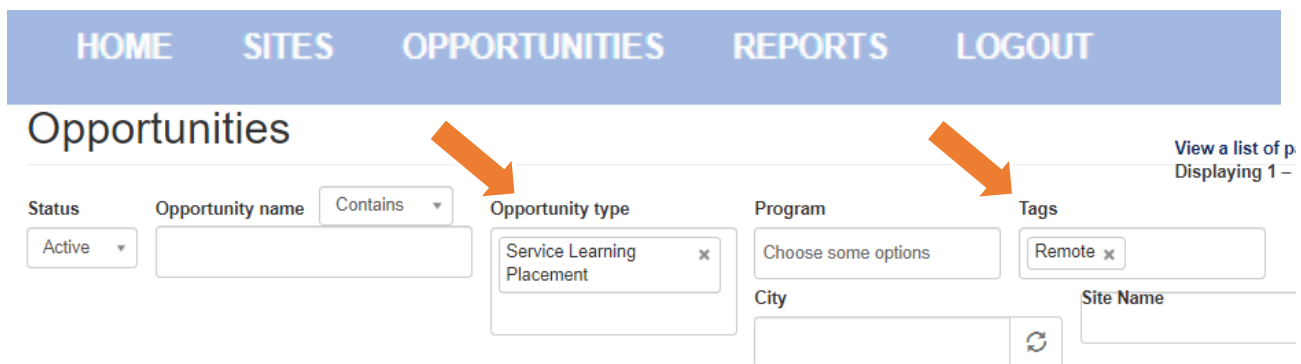
Remote Service Learning Resources & Best Practices

Rethinking Service Learning from On-site to Online

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With current guidelines to protect public health in the era of COVID-19, we at the Office of Internships and Service Learning encourage you to support our Community Partners and energize your online learning through remote Service Learning.

You can search for remote opportunities in the Community Partner database. Click *Opportunities*, choose Opportunity type “*Service Learning Placement*” and the Tag “*Remote*.” <https://app.calstates4.com/csusm>



The screenshot shows a navigation bar with links for HOME, SITES, OPPORTUNITIES, REPORTS, and LOGOUT. Below the navigation bar is the 'Opportunities' search form. The form includes a 'Status' dropdown set to 'Active', an 'Opportunity name' search box with a 'Contains' dropdown, an 'Opportunity type' field with a tag 'Service Learning Placement', a 'Program' dropdown set to 'Choose some options', a 'City' search box with a refresh icon, a 'Tags' field with a tag 'Remote', and a 'Site Name' search box. A 'View a list of p' link and 'Displaying 1 -' are visible on the right side of the form.

Benefits of Remote Service

- Compensates for lack of interaction that can occur in online classes.
- Motivates students by allowing them to apply skills in real-world settings.
- Frees Service Learning from geographical constraint and transportation concerns.
- Engages populations that may be unable to work on-site, such as students with certain disabilities, students living in remote areas, etc.

Examples of Remote Service

- **Education:** Developing online curriculum, YouTube tutorials, online tutoring
- **Psychology:** Online mentoring of at-risk children, online Girl Scout troop leaders
- **Spanish:** Students translate letters from families in Mexico to sponsors in the U.S., create video language tutorials/songs
- **Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies:** Research and create a public awareness campaigns for the Hope & Wellness Center for Instagram
- **Writing:** Grant writing, creative writing projects with inmates at a local jail/prison
- **IT:** Building online communities for an autism group, create/update websites
- **Healthcare:** Update human resources policies for a nonprofit to ensure compliance with regulatory agencies.
- **History:** create digital oral history projects for a public or school library
- **Engineering:** design water treatment prototypes

- **Music/Dance:** videotape performances for a senior center
- **Kinesiology:** design campaign for senior fall prevention
- **Marketing:** create marketing materials for a nonprofit (brochure/website/flier/template thank you letter for donors, newspaper advertisement/publicity for a holiday donation drive)

Technology Considerations

Consider the technology needed for students and Community Partners to collaborate remotely. How will students connect to their remote service partner? Consult with IDS (Instructional Design Services ids@csusm.edu) in your course design.

Service Learning Task	Digital Tools
Communication	Google groups, Pronto, Slack, Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp
Community data collection	Google forms, campus survey tools (Qualtrics, Survey Monkey)
Collaborative writing	Google docs, wikis, Dropbox
Collaborative resource sharing	Google drive, Diigo
Media sharing	Instagram, Facebook, FlipGrid
Presentations	Google slides, VoiceThread

Equity Considerations from the Peralta [Online Equity Rubric](#).

- All technology required for the course is **listed and described in the syllabus**; each technology is listed in the learning unit that requires it; and resources for technology help are provided where appropriate.
- **Offer alternatives** for students with technology impediments, and clearly delineate where/how students can get assistance with required course technology.
- Syllabus lists clear pathways for online students to access and **utilize campus support and well-being resources**.
- Course communications and activities **foster personal connections among students** and demonstrate the instructor cares about each unique student's participation and success in the class.

Consider Project-Based Service Learning

Project-based Service Learning (Indirect Service Learning) may be a better option with limited sites accepting direct service. However, *it requires advanced planning by the professor*. Start by contacting Community Partners in our database and discuss how your students might provide value to them. (Keep in mind that Service Learning best practices consider Community Partners as co-educators, and the service should benefit students and community organizations equally.) With this approach, you could partner your class with one or more organizations and divide students into groups to complete a variety of deliverables for that organization. Here is a [problem-solving rubric](#) from AAC&U that works well with project-based assignments.

Direct Service Learning

Work directly with clients, face-to-face

e.g., tutoring, teaching, performances

Indirect Service Learning

Support the Community Partner without working directly with clients

Focus on broad issues that benefit the community, *e.g., solve a problem, develop curriculum, transcribe/translate documents, build a website, create a video or other marketing materials*

Research—Gather and present information, *e.g., write a guide on community services, conduct water testing, surveys, experiments, interviews*

Advocacy—Educate others about topics of public interest, *e.g., information campaigns, training people in disaster prevention*

Indirect Service examples:

Partner with a school district—Create an e-learning library and share OneDrive links to curriculum, video lessons, reading storybooks, worksheets, etc.

Partner with a clinic—Create a public awareness campaign around specific topics by creating videos, workbooks, newsletters, social media advocacy posts, etc.

Contact organizations in our [database](#) to discuss possibilities. Be creative! Think outside the box!

Once you have identified your Community Partners, involve them in the class via Zoom for introductions, mid-semester Q&A session for students to get feedback on assignments, and perhaps final presentations to the Community Partner in real time.

As always, the syllabus should connect the service to course learning objectives and present an overview of (and rationale for) the Service Learning project. Link the service to the course through ongoing reflections, class readings, discussion board postings, lectures, information in the course shell, and final products.

Common Issues and Best Practices

Issue	Description	Best Practice
Unequal group participation	Some students take over their group while others sit out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate regular anonymous peer-review into project grade • Ask groups to create a “contract” for their group listing expectations, individual responsibilities, timelines, and process for dealing with problems
Technology	Software and hardware limitations, firewalls, individual skill level, internet access, glitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate technology needs prior to course • Provide training for instructor, students, Community Partner • Specify technology requirements and abilities in syllabus • Have a backup plan in case technology fails • Conduct trial runs to test video/audio
Timeframe of courses	Compressed time for some online courses may hinder full product development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set realistic goals for student deliverables • Break a project up over two or more terms
Student disconnect	Lack of student interaction among students, client, and/or instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require teamwork; live client sessions; break-out discussions • Choose partners willing to work with technology • Allow opportunities for reflection • Archive synchronous events for later viewing

Incorporate Best Practices from traditional Service Learning Courses (See additional materials, including the [Service Learning Faculty Handbook](#), on our website)

- Explicit connections between service and course learning objectives
- Ongoing reflection activities—
 - See these links for ideas on reflection prompts: [CSU Channel Islands](#), [GTC Reflection Toolkit](#)
- Appropriate time commitment
- Student input on the project
- Community Partner benefit
- Feedback/evaluation

Additional Best practices

- Invite a representative from our office to Zoom with your class to discuss the placement process. Request at this link: <https://www.csusm.edu/ougs/slce/servicelearning/classroompresentation.html>
- Build rapport between the students and Community Partner and among student teams, using live video chat, breakout groups, etc.
- Record live sessions for viewing by students unable to attend; have these students do a “movie review”-- videotape a summary and critique of the session for classmates with additional insights.
- Reflection through multiple channels—discussion board posts, videos, voice thread, live video conferences, etc.
- Brief the Community Partner on student behaviors e.g., students may hesitate to ask questions; students may email a few days before a project is due and expect a response within 24 hours.
- Draft “Memorandums of Understanding” (MOU) contracts between students/instructor, instructor/Community Partner, Community Partner/students stating goals, timeline, deliverables, expectations, etc.
- Group students for the service project—one student can serve as team leader who communicates directly with Community Partner to avoid overload.
- Engage students during live video conferences using whiteboards, chat, breakout rooms, etc.

Links for Remote Service Ideas

- Ideas for remote service: <https://medium.com/the-faculty/service-learning-during-coronavirus-easy-ideas-for-every-subject-59f8bb041f39>
- Omprakash offers a free network of online volunteering opportunities with grassroots social impact organizations in over 40 countries around the world. Browse the network and apply for online positions here: <https://www.omprakash.org/search>
- Online volunteer sites: [Amnesty International](#), the [United Nations](#), [The Smithsonian Institute](#), [Translators without Borders](#), [Bookshare.org](#) (creating audio books); [Virtual Volunteer Opportunities You Can Do From Home](#)

Sources

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