

FACULTY GUIDE TO THE PEDAGOGY OF SERVICE LEARNING

2020



UConn

SERVICE LEARNING

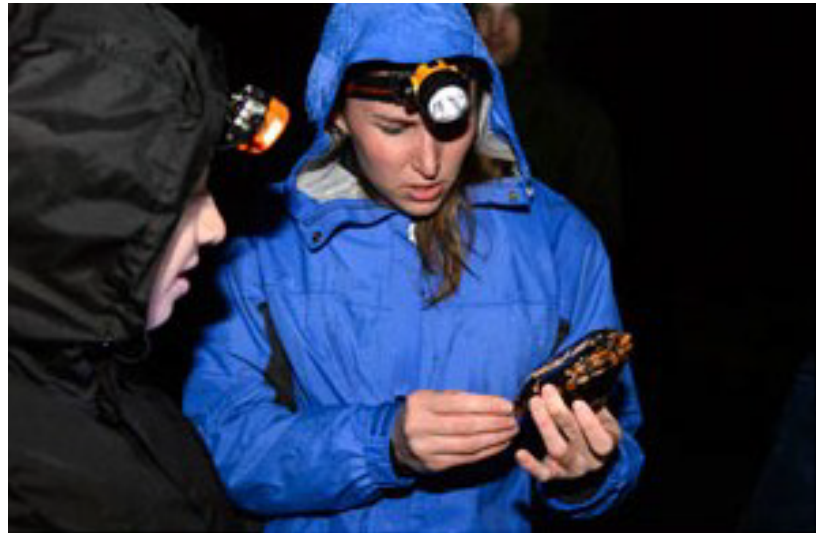
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Definition of Service Learning

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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.

- *Carnegie Definition of Service Learning (from the National Service Learning Clearinghouse)*



KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF SERVICE LEARNING

- Collaborative partnerships that are mutually beneficial
- Integration of course content with service activity
- Ongoing faculty guided critical reflection/analysis
- Integration of responsible social justice topics

What Can We Do For You?

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The Office of Service Learning is a resource for faculty, staff, students, and the community. We are here to facilitate service learning opportunities across the University in accordance with the Academic Vision.

- Community Partner identification,, outreach, facilitation, communication and logistical support
- Course and project brainstorming
- Idea formation and strategy
- Course and curriculum development
- SL Course Designation application and process
- Pedagogical support
- Critical Reflection assistance
- Faculty development for SL preparation
- Faculty and Student Research & Engaged Scholarship
- Advertising of Community Partner Opportunities
- Presentations to classes, departments, community partners
- Assist with IRB, OSP, and other administrative paperwork



Why Service Learning?

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Service Learning is a pedagogy that promotes the formation of collaborative, sustainable partnerships between the university and the community. Faculty members and students work together with community partners to identify solutions to society's most pressing issues, among them food justice, social equality, health disparities, homelessness, economic and small business development, education, climate change, transportation systems, and clean, sustainable energy and air systems.

Service Learning develops students as active learners who become stakeholders in their own education. The integration of course content, community work, and reflection fosters an active learning environment that strengthens students' social, moral, professional, and civic development.

Service Learning connects disciplines to help solve multidimensional issues that our society faces in mutual collaboration with our communities. It enables faculty to be creative and innovative with their research questions pertaining to community needs and allows students to be part of that reciprocal process.



Service Learning is a pedagogy that allows a faculty member to step outside the box of the classroom and develop innovative, meaningful learning experiences for students while developing real community solutions with a community partner. But where does a faculty member begin?

A first step is to consider the following questions:

1. What community challenges correspond with courses I teach or want to develop? With research that I do or might want to undertake?
2. Of those community challenges, which most interest me? How might a community partnership benefit from my research and teaching? What shared product might result from such a collaboration—a publication of faculty or student work, a community document or study, a public presentation?
3. Which community challenge is the best fit for the course I choose, its time frame, and the students I want to reach? For my students' skill level?
4. What kind of service do I want my students to do and does that match with their skill level? What preparation for the project/experience will they need?
5. What kind of skills do I want my students to develop and how do I align my course objectives and assignments to ensure that they do? How do these skills contribute to the larger skill set we are building as a faculty through our major?
6. Do I have existing relationships with organizations/small businesses/governmental agencies that work on these community issues? If not, what kind of group do I want to work with and in what region?

Service Learning is here to support you in the brainstorming process and to help locate community groups. Please contact julia.yakovich@uconn.edu for a brainstorming session.

Examples of Service Learning

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Course

Service Learning

Type of Service

Engineering

- Senior Design project

Worked with Guiding Light Orphans

- Address the health crisis in Masindi, Uganda
- Design a biogas digester
 - This will improve sanitation and generate electricity

Project based,
direct service

Chemical Engineering

Knox Parks Tree Planting Program

- Assess the impact of trees in an urban area
- How it effects asthma and other concerns

Project based,
indirect service

Engineering

- Senior Design project

Collaboration with Spring Valley Student Farm

- Goal is to install solar panels at farm
- Panels reduce costs and create sustainability

Project based,
indirect service

Environmental Anthropology

Adding daytime lighting to Hop River Trail Tunnel

- Dark interior is currently unsafe to trail users

Project based,
indirect service

Caribbean and Latin American Studies

Students work with migrant farmers

- Learn tobacco harvesting and teach English
- Tutor children of migrants at Willimantic Middle School
- Assist with traveling medical clinic through AHEC

Direct Service

Service Learning Activities

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When you are developing the service aspect of your course, it is important to reflect on the types of activities that would work best with your course objectives, students and community partners. There are multiple models from which to choose:

- **Direct**—positions students in direct contact with people/organizations. Ex. Tutoring at the Boys and Girls Club, helping with a community garden
- **Indirect**—engages students with a cause or community need through means that does not involve having ongoing hands-on contact with organization/entity of service. Ex. Survey development, data analysis, resource development plan, marketing, social media development
- **Civic Action or Advocacy**—provides students with an opportunity to affect change in public policy Ex. Presenting at town council meeting, legislative public hearing



Adapted from Furco, A. (1996). Service-learning: A balanced approach to experiential education. Expanding boundaries: Service and Learning. Corporation for National Service.

When choosing an approach, consider how many hours you would like students to be involved in SL, what percentage of the grade their community work will fulfill, and how it will balance with other course objectives and work.

Service learning courses can start small and build capacity over time. Service learning courses may be self-contained, or may be part of a larger plan within an academic program. This three phase model will assist in the development of your service learning initiatives in a way that is feasible and responsible to your students and the community partners involved.

Service-Learning in the Curriculum: A Three-Phase Developmental Model

Service-learning courses and partnerships can be more successful for all stakeholders if they are designed to align with and build student capacity over time.

By understanding student development and considering the skills and knowledge levels of the students with whom you will be working, you can design a project that:

- Aligns expectations with competencies;
- Offers the appropriate balance of challenge and support;
- Builds student skills to progressively prepare them for the next level;
- and Results in more positive and reciprocal relationships with partners.

Consider designing your service-learning course or program to align with the following three phases.



While this model is helpful in designing service-learning courses that stand alone, it is also meant to spur conversation within a given academic unit or progressive curriculum. The more we build our students' capacity, the higher they can achieve in the long run. If we do not pay attention to building that capacity, we risk potential disappointment for everyone involved.

This model is based on student development research and its links to course design- See related CUPS handout "Service-Learning and Student Development."

See the next page for a full description of each phase.

Williams Howe, C., Coleman, K., Hamshaw, K., & Westdijk, K. (2015). *Student Development and Service-Learning: A Three-Phased Model for Course Design*. *International Journal of Research on Service-Learning and Community Engagement*, 1(2). (forthcoming)

Building Your Course

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From Theory to Practice: What do Courses Look Like?

PHASE I: EXPOSURE

Courses typically offered to first or second year students, or any student who has never been introduced to service-learning pedagogy. Often take place early within an academic career and/or major and serve as a foundation for future, more complex experiences.

Goals: introduction/exposure to service-learning and course content; initial skill development (teamwork, project management, interacting with community); introduction to reflection as academic practice; building cultural and interpersonal competencies.

Instructor Role: Primary Manager - defines project (in collaboration with community partner), carefully controls student interaction with partner, provides close guidance throughout the process, outlines clear processes and expectations.

Project Description: clearly defined, concrete, small in scale, time limited, often happen within the classroom, rather than in the field. Can also be "hypothetical" (not considered service-learning, but preparation for service-learning).

Connection to Academic Content: content is primary focus, project explicitly connected.

EXAMPLES:

Entry level service-learning: event support; one-day service projects; survey or information gathering (with intentional reflection and connection to course content);

Exposure to community: interviews; basic "mapping" exercises; event attendance; organizational profiles

PHASE II: CAPACITY BUILDING

Courses typically in the sophomore or junior year-students are moving more deeply into their discipline and are beginning to master concepts and skills that can be effectively applied in community-based settings. Ideally, students would have experienced a Phase 1 course.

Goals: building student capacity, raising expectations, increasing student responsibility for outcomes; practicing personal/professional skills introduced in earlier courses; progressing to higher-levels of critical thinking through reflection.

Instructor Role: Facilitator - continue to provide structure (tools, timelines, and reporting) but raise expectations for students to self-manage within this structure; select partners and establish agreed-upon outcomes, but welcome student participation and input in the process.

Project Description: major component of the course (a unit or major project); may focus on an extended relationship with an organization (an enhanced internship or field-based experience); expectations are defined, but students take leadership in deciding how to meet them.

Connection to Academic Content: explicit, but challenges students to find additional connections, synergies, and critiques. Balance between focus on content and application.

EXAMPLES:

"Deliverables" such as public relations materials, web content, exhibits, etc.

Educational Outreach/Programming – students teach what they are learning to others;

Second-level survey work – students play a role in designing and analyzing surveys;

Consultation – students work with an agency to provide advice on planning, proposals, etc.;

Agency "placements" – students work regularly in internship-like placements.

PHASE III: RESPONSIBILITY

Courses often designed as capstone or culminating experiences that take place during the final semesters of the college experience, and could also be connected to student theses. Students at this level should have already been exposed to Phase 1 and 2 service-learning.

Goals: skill mastery, professional development, student accountability/responsibility for outcomes, independent decision-making, effective group work, problem-solving; mastering higher levels of critical thinking through reflection.

Instructor Role: "Coach" - empowerment with support; provide suggestions/tools for structure, ongoing consultation, but raise expectations for students to follow-through and seek resources on their own. Keep "in touch" with projects and partners to monitor progress.

Project Description: developed collaboratively between partners and students, with faculty input; require students to take high-level responsibility for defining, understanding, and working to address an issue; often span an entire semester or year; could focus on "deliverables," programs, initiatives, or ongoing professional roles within an organization.

Connection to Academic Content: students are demonstrating knowledge of content through projects. While content is still delivered, it may be driven by topics that support projects and related to transitions to professional roles.

EXAMPLES:

Capstone courses - students work in groups or individually to define and complete projects with community partners based on proposals/interests from the organizations;

Deliverables that move beyond a small-scale project to a larger implementation (media campaign, curriculum development, web site development, components of strategic plan, etc.);

Service-learning enhanced internships (meeting clear community need; focused reflection);

Undergraduate community-based research;

Student leadership in service-learning programs at the Phase 1 or Phase 2 level (such as teaching assistant programs, coordination of international service-learning projects, etc.)

What is 'Reflection'?

Reflection is a process by which the students become active learners within the service learning experience. Reflection is the mode or tool by which students make a connection between the course content and the service.

"Reflection is a mental activity that builds a bridge between the human inner world of ideas, and the outside world of experience" (Hinchey, 2004).

Service Learning experience becomes educational when reflection guides the students to develop a new understanding of the situation, which, in turn, lead to a change in the state of mind and more informed action (Bringle & Hatcher).

Bringle, R. G., & Hatcher, J. A. (1999). Reflection in service learning: Making meaning of experience. Educational Horizons, 77, 179–185.

Connecting Reflection to Service-Learning,

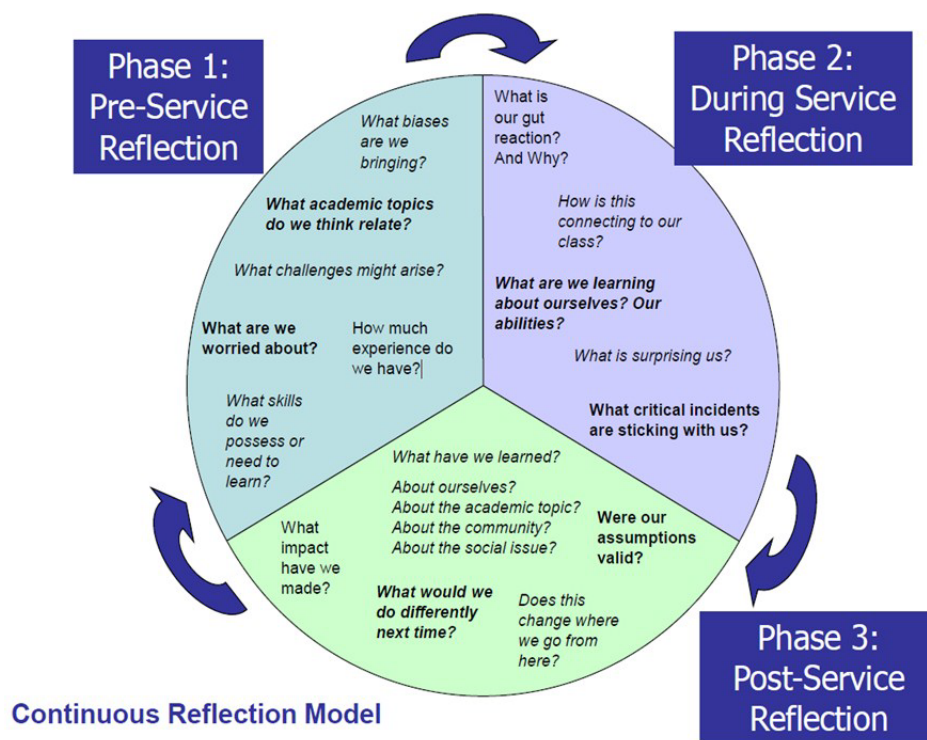
"Psychologist Irwin Altman (1996) identified three distinct kinds of knowledge: content knowledge which involves the learning of facts (the capital of Oregon is Salem); process knowledge, or skills that involve learning how to do something (how to search a library database); and socially relevant knowledge, which connects a person's perspective with content within particular social contexts (ex. how to effect social change through activism). Traditional teaching methods typically produce content and sometimes, process knowledge. Service learning, however, involves a kind of teaching and learning that promote both content and process knowledge, as well as developing socially relevant knowledge in students. The key to making this happen is reflection."

(Cress, C.M., Collier, P.J., Reitenaur, V.L. and Associates. (2005). Learning Through Service, pg. 84)

Characteristics of Successful Reflection

Eyler, Giles & Schmiede (1996) used in-depth, personal, semi-structured interviews with students to determine what methods of reflection worked best. Their findings indicate that SL reflection should be

1. **Continuous** - Pre, During, and Post reflection
2. **Connected** - Integrate service with classwork.
3. **Challenging** - push students to think in new ways, raise new questions, produce new understanding, and new ways of problem-solving.
4. **Contextualized** - should be appropriate for the context and setting of the particular service-learning project.



(Eyler, Giles & Schmiede, 1996 *A Practitioner's Guide to Reflection in Service-learning: Student Voices and Reflections*. A Technical Assistance Project funded by the Corporation for National Service. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University.)

Critical Reflection

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Faculty sometimes question whether reflection should be graded. You can grade reflection like any other assignment. Establish expectations by using a rubric similar to the example below. Categories should be specific and measurable based upon course content and community activity.

Please note that this rubric can be adapted to work for individual faculty members and assignments.

	Incomplete/ Did not meet minimum standard 1	Unsatisfac- tory 2	Fair 3	Good 4	Excellent 5
Originality – reflection articulates your insights and demonstrates creative thinking					
Integration – combination of ideas, sources, material, makes clear connections between academic concepts to the service activity					
Clarity/Logical – understandable, provides detail, parts make sense as a whole					
Relevance – Focuses on core issues, relates to topics at hand					
Depth – explores the dynamic interrelatedness of ideas, concepts, and experiences					
Breadth – considers multiple viewpoints, not self-serving or one sided.					
Professional - Grammatically correct, neat, clean, stapled, typed, on time					

There are many ways to incorporate critical thinking and reflection into the classroom. Consider mixing and matching from the list below to provide multiple

- **Journals:** Writing in journals is widely used by service-learning programs to promote reflection. They're most meaningful when instructors pose key questions for analysis.
- **Ethnographies:** Students capture their community experience through field notes.
- **Case Studies Papers:** Students analyze an organizational issue and write a case study that identifies a decision that needs to be made.
- **Multimedia Class Presentations:** Students create a video or photo documentary on the community experience.
- **Theory Application Papers:** Students select a major theory covered in the course and analyze its application to the experience in the community.
- **Agency Analysis Papers:** Students identify organizational structure, culture and mission.
- **Presentations to Community Organizations:** Students present work to community organization staff, board members, and participants.
- **Speakers:** Invite community members or organization staff to present in class.
- **Group Discussion:** Through guided discussion questions, have students critically think about their service experiences.
- **Community Events:** Identify community events that students can attend to learn more.
- **Mapping:** Create a visual map that shows how the service-learning experience connects to larger issues at the state/national/global level.
- **Videos:** View a video or documentary to elicit discussion about critical issues that relate to their service experiences.
- **Letters-to-the Editor:** Students write a letter-to-the-editor or to government officials that address issues important to the community organizations where they are working
- **Creative Projects:** Students make a collage or write a poem or song to express an experience.

“Service learning involves a kind of teaching and learning that promote both content and process knowledge, as well as developing a socially relevant knowledge in students. The key to making this happen is reflection.” - *Peter Collier and Dilafruz Williams (Chapter 6, Learning Through Service, Cress, et al. 2005)*

Community Partnerships

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As a land and sea grant public university, UConn is committed to the betterment of communities in the state of Connecticut and beyond. This mandate is a critical component of Service Learning. The Office of Service Learning facilitates and fosters mutually beneficial and sustainable relationships between members of the University and members of the community. Mutual benefit and sustainability occur when clear and common goals are formed, nurtured, and met over time.

“High quality service learning that is beneficial to all parties involved must be built on a solid foundation of carefully developed partnerships.” – *Barbara Jacoby (Building Partnerships for Service-Learning)*

Community Partnerships are members of the community in businesses, government agencies, and social service organizations that agree to work with students individually or collectively in order to meet community needs. Partnerships are designed to create a service to the community while addressing educational opportunities for students. No two community partnerships are alike.

(Learning Through Service, Cress, et al. 2005, pp. 18 and 19)

Torres, J. and Schaffer J. (2000) **Benchmarks for Campus/Community Partnerships.**
Providence, Rhode Island: **Campus Compact.**
Used with permission from Campus Compact.

Stage I: Designing the partnership based on values of sharing and reciprocity.

Stage II: Building collaborative relationships among partners.

Stage III: Sustaining the partnerships – linking partnerships to the missions of partnering institutions, establishing, processes for decision-making and problem-solving, and installing the mechanisms for continuous evaluation.

The Office of Service Learning is able to facilitate and foster relationships with community partners at any stage.

While some faculty already have connections to community agencies, others may find the identification of a community partner a bit overwhelming. The director of Service Learning can help you select and facilitate a partnership.



Ask these questions to assess a potential community partner relationship:

What are my interests regarding the community?

How does my course content align with these community interests?

What organizations do I have existing relationships with and do they align with the interests and goals and objectives of my course?

With what organizations do I have existing relationships and do their interests align with mine?

Do I want to work with them in this capacity? Why or why not? Are they a good fit for the skills we offer and want to learn?

Do they have the resources to make a partnership possible (human resources, training abilities, presenting, etc.)?

What are the capabilities of my students?

- What are their skills and background?
- Are they experienced enough for the project or activity?
- If not, how can I scale the project/activity down to make it realistic while still meeting the community partner needs? (Communicate all student factors to partners up front.)

What is the timeline for the project? Can this be done over the semester or should it be a multi-semester project?

What can I do to maintain/sustain this relationship over time?

Syllabus: Elements to Include

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✓ Course Description

- ⇒ Definition of Service Learning
- ⇒ Explanation of why service learning is an appropriate pedagogy for the course
- ⇒ Description of how service activities are related to the course content, goals and objectives
- ⇒ Details of community work students will do
- ⇒ Identify community partners along with the need the project is addressing and how it is related to the course content
- ⇒ Benefits of service learning to students and community

✓ Course Goals & Objectives

- ⇒ How met in whole or in part by service project/activities

✓ Assignments

- ⇒ Description of both written and oral reflection activities/ assignments (journal, blog, essays, discussion, other) and how they will be integrated into the course (during class time or outside)
- ⇒ Explanation of the role of reflection in generating, deepening, and documenting learning as relates to service learning
- ⇒ Expectations and/or criteria for reflection activities
- ⇒ Assessment of reflection activities



More syllabus elements to include

✓ Service Learning Activities

(Can be an appendix or in the body of the syllabus)

- ⇒ Additional description of service-learning project/activities
- ⇒ Information on how students will be matched with partner
- ⇒ Time commitment/requirement
- ⇒ Scheduling and transportation
- ⇒ Expectations of behavior
- ⇒ Presentation or product delivery to community partner
- ⇒ Public Dissemination: Opportunities for the public to see and benefit from the students' work



✓ Grading/Assessment

- ⇒ Identifies assignments related to service learning and their contribution to the course grade.
- ⇒ Establishes that credit will be given for demonstrations of learning, not for completion of service.
- ⇒ Describes (or shows with a rubric) how student learning will be assessed.

✓ Policies and Procedures

- ⇒ Addresses policies and procedures for missed service-learning activities.

Faculty Benefit: PTR & Engaged Scholarship

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Engaged Scholarship involves the university member in the integrated work of applied teaching and research in the spirit of discovery, creativity, and engagement for the public good. In a context of collaboration and reciprocity, faculty work community members on a local, regional/state, national, or global level to expand and enhance the reach and impact of their work. Engaged Scholarship and Service Learning go hand-in-hand and can occur across disciplines.

Faculty work with the community is considered research and can be used toward the PTR process. For more about relevant [journals](#) and PTR at UConn please [click here](#).

Engaged Scholarship -

- Connects intellectual assets of higher education institutions, faculty and staff expertise, high-quality graduate and undergraduate students, to public issues.
- Enhances academic learning and knowledge generation because of its ability to blend research, teaching, and service.
- Fulfills the University mission and goals, as well as addresses community needs and interests.
- Creates collaborations between residents, organizations, policy makers and their academic partner to identify relevant societal needs and share their perspectives, expectations and expertise to jointly develop and apply solutions to issues.



The following are questions faculty often ask in their first visit to the Office of Service Learning to explore service learning further.

Is there another faculty member who is doing something similar to me?

Most likely the answer is yes. If they are not here at UConn, Julia Yakovich, Director of Service Learning can link you up with a faculty member who can provide tips and guidance in your field of study. You can view the list of [Service Learning Faculty Fellows](#) to get an idea of topic areas of faculty here at UConn.

How do I choose the right community partner?

If you have your course goals and objectives established and a community partner has similar needs, a relationship can be established based upon mutual needs. You'll want to ask if there is a person dedicated to this project to assist the students and to participate in class discussions, reflection, and the service portion at their community site.

Are students typically open to this type of class?

Students appreciate this style of teaching and learning because of the benefits to them (reinforced learning, career development, social and cultural benefits). With that said, it is important that students are aware of service learning in order to prepare them for the experience ahead of time.

How can I let my students know about Service Learning?

We encourage all faculty to apply for a [Service Learning Designation](#) for it be listed in Peoplesoft. Other methods faculty can use is to advertise ahead of time and to email registered students ahead of the semester to explain service learning. It is important to embed Service Learning in your syllabus and to explain on the first day of class. If the goals and objectives between the course curriculum and community project align and reflection occurs, they will make the connections between the service and the learning, theory and practice.

Is there a specific number of hours my students should do for service learning?

- There is no set number of hours placed upon a service learning project/experience. The number of hours is determined between the faculty member and community partner based upon their individual and mutual needs.

How will my students get to the community partner site?

Students can use a number of options that will vary based upon campus. From Storrs, students can use the Willimantic Bus or make use of their own cars. The Office of Community Outreach has transportation for groups that will need to be arranged ahead of time and has a cost. Students at regional campuses may use their own transportation, busses, trains, walking, etc. If faculty need additional assistance with transportation, we encourage you to contact julia.yakovich@uconn.edu.

I'm looking to publish. Is my work with the community publishable?

Absolutely. What you do in collaboration with the community partner can be published, whether in journals of your discipline or in SL journals. We strongly encourage all faculty to consider publishing the outcomes of any data created through SL relationships, provided that the community partner has agreed to it. Publications can also turn into grant opportunities which can also lead to sustained relationships. You will want to check in with the IRB ahead of time for submission logistics. The Office of Service Learning can assist you with this part of the process as well.

Do I need to do use service learning every semester?

- You do not need to use service learning every semester, however, the partnerships that you develop should be kept intact in order to create a sustainable relationship, which the OPE strongly encourages. If you are not doing a service learning project, perhaps another faculty member can utilize your existing relationship. A collaboration between others at the university and community partner is important so that investments in partnerships are continued and nurtured over time.



Why do I need to include critical reflection?

Structured critical reflection is the key to successful service learning. It is a process and not something that is 'one and done'. We want students to participate as active learners; reflection is a mechanism to achieving that goal. It is the 'bridge' between theory and practice that enables students to grapple with what they learn in the classroom and what they experience in the real world. It allows faculty to 'check in' with students to be sure learning goals are being met and to be sure the community relationship is productive and beneficial to both the student and the partner. It allows students time to process how course material pertains directly to the experience with the community and it therefore reinforces the learning. Involving community partners in the reflection process is encouraged because it reinforces the relationship and allows participation in meaningful, educational, and practical ways.

How should I structure reflection?

Reflection can occur through a number of forms. It can be a facilitated discussion with the class or a written assignment (journals, papers, blog, online chat). It can come in the form of artwork, music, poetry, role playing or any other creative mechanism. The key to students getting the most out of reflection is in the questions asked by the instructor/facilitator prodding students to think deeper and in meaningful ways about how the coursework and community aspect are connected. What, so what, now what? Is a solid foundation for the beginning stage of reflection. More resources for reflection can be found on pages 15-18 in the guidebook.





Critical Reflection—<http://www.compact.org/disciplines/reflection/>

Traditional vs. Critical Service-Learning: Engaging the Literature to Differentiate Two Models: <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ831374.pdf>

Service-Learning Essentials: Questions, Answers, and Lessons Learned
By Barbara Jacoby
<https://iu.instructure.com/courses/1540449/files/70573220/download?verifier=xyqmokCpWcmU173NsqJmgIHeoPBrKEM7PUhdjZO0&wrap=1>

The Importance of Reflection in Education:
<http://www.edunators.com/index.php/becoming-the-edunator/step-5-reflecting-for-learning/the-importance-of-reflection-in-education>

Sample Syllabi
<https://compact.org/resource-type/syllabi/>

Campus-Community Partnerships: The Terms of Engagement by Robert Bringle and Julie Hatcher
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1540-4560.00273/pdf>

Reflection: Linking Service and Learning—Linking Students and Communities
By Janet Eyler
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1540-4560.00274/pdf>



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<http://www.servicelearning.umn.edu/info/reflection.html#FourCs>

Service Learning Contact List

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