

Service Learning Project

Overview: This semester you will be creating a Service Learning Project as part of your community service. You will be working with a group of your classmates to research, plan, and execute a Service Learning Project.

Due Dates:

Presentations due –Finals Day

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.

Through service-learning, students use what they learn in the classroom to solve real-life problems. They not only learn the practical applications of their studies, they become actively contributing citizens and community members through the service they perform.

What Service-Learning Looks Like

If school students collect trash out of an urban streambed, they are providing a valued service to the community as volunteers. If school students collect trash from an urban streambed, analyze their findings to determine the possible sources of pollution, and share the results with residents of the neighborhood, they are engaging in service-learning.

In the service-learning example, in addition to providing an important service to the community, students are learning about water quality and laboratory analysis, developing an understanding of pollution issues, and practicing communications skills. They may also reflect on their personal and career interests in science, the environment, public policy or other related areas. Both the students and the community have been involved in a transformative experience.

Examples of Service-Learning

Elementary school students in Florida studied the consequences of natural disasters. The class designed a kit for families to use to collect their important papers in case of evacuation, which students distributed to community members.

Middle school students in Pennsylvania learned about the health consequences of poor nutrition and lack of exercise, and then brought their learning to life by conducting health fairs, creating a healthy cookbook, and opening a fruit and vegetable stand for the school and community.

University students in Michigan looked for ways to support struggling local non-profit organizations during difficult economic times. Graduate communication students honed their skills while providing a wide variety of public relations services with community partners, including developing press kits and managing event coordination.

How Is Service-Learning Different From Community Service?

Service-learning is community service with extra emphasis placed on learning. While both community service and service learning fill a need in a community through volunteer efforts, service-learning purposely uses that need as an opportunity for youth to learn skills, knowledge and positive attitudes. Service learning sets educational goals or objectives, provides time for learning through reflection, and keeps track of the lessons learned. Service learning involves youth in all phases of the project not just in doing the work.

Investigation – explore community priorities and choose a focus area.

<http://www.servicelearning.org/>

Possible Areas of Service

Bullying prevention	Dropout prevention	Human rights	Substance abuse prevention
Civic engagement	Economic opportunity	Hunger	Tutoring
Community development	Education	Immigrants and migrant populations	Veterans and military families
Community gardens	Environmental stewardship	Intergenerational	Violence prevention
Disaster services	Health and wellness	Justice system	Voting
Diversity and cultural awareness	Healthy futures	Mentoring	
	Historic preservation	Peace	
	Homeland security	Pregnancy prevention	
	Homelessness		

Service Learning – Beginning Research Questions

Your group should have chosen an area of focus by now. Now we will begin pinpointing a specific problem to prepare to solve the problem.

Area of focus:

In order to understand the common structure of problems, we will use this concept:

**Problem =
Condition → Consequences and Costs**

**Example =
Problem =** too much trash on the SMHS campus

Condition → Consequences and Costs
(unclean campus after break and lunch) → (littered trash creates extra work for custodians/draws seagulls and crows to campus/etc.)

Once you have identified the CONDITION and CONSEQUENCES AND COSTS, you will use this information to develop some research questions:

Examples:

- *Why do students throw their trash on the ground instead of the trash can?*
- *How can students be motivated to dispose of their trash properly?*
- *Are teens more motivated by positive rewards or negative consequences?*
- *Why do seagulls and crows scavenge for trash?*
- *How does an increase in trash lead to a drop in school pride?*
- *Etc.*

Develop your own research questions for the problem you have identified:

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Each group member needs to choose a different research question to investigate. You will need to research this question on the internet and develop one page of Cornell Notes on the information you find.

Service Learning Group must prepare a PowerPoint or Video about their Service Learning.

Things to include:

- **Name/Number/Contact Info Etc..**
- **What you did?**
- **What you learned?**
- **Would you do it again?**
- **Number of hours?**

SMHS Service-Learning Agreement

This form should be completed before students begin their service-learning project. Students are responsible for obtaining all signatures and providing one copy to teacher and the Service-learning Site Supervisor by _____ (date determined by instructor of course). Students will keep the original.

Semester/Year: _____ Today's Date: _____

Course Number and Title: _____ Teacher: _____

Community Partner/Site: _____

Community Partner/Site Supervisor Name: _____

Community Partner/Site Contact Information: Phone _____ Email _____

Address _____

Total Service-learning Hours Required: _____ **(hours)**

Start Date: _____ **End Date:** _____

Student Role:

- Be aware of the organization's needs and provide assistance where and when needed, fulfilling time and service obligations.
- Contact the agency to arrange initial meeting to discuss service-learning hours and project. (In some cases, instructor of course may make initial contact with sites.)
- Submit necessary paperwork: Service-Learning Agreement, Media Release, Service Learning Final Evaluation (Copies should be submitted to the Center for Civic Engagement, your Instructor, and the Community Partner/Site Supervisor. Student will keep original.)
- Adhere to organizational rules and procedures, including confidentiality of organization and client information.
- Periodically reflect upon and re-evaluate the service experience keeping in mind the objectives of all parties involved.
- Operate with integrity and professionalism at all times; which includes being punctual, meeting deadlines and being open to supervision and feedback which will facilitate learning and personal growth.

Faculty Role:

- Provide students with structure and guidance to process and reflect upon service learning experiences.
- Assist students in connecting their service learning experience with course learning objectives.
- Participate in evaluation process.

Community Site Supervisor/Organization Role:

- Provide service-learning opportunities that are significant and/or challenging to the students, relevant to course learning objectives, and address community agency's goals.
- Provide training, supervision, feedback, resources and sufficient information about the organization to aid in the success of students' service-learning projects.
- Participate in the evaluation process.

Task you will complete during community service:

Students complete.

1. _____

2. _____

Other objectives:

What is the organization trying to accomplish:

Students complete with Site Supervisor service-learning supervisor.

1. _____

2. _____

Other objectives:

Project Description (Defined by the Community Site Supervisor, Instructor and Students. Please describe the specific service role, tasks, etc. that the student will be expected to fulfill.)

Service-learning Reflection Form

Describe the service activities that you are doing.

How have you benefitted from your service experience personally and academically?

What connections do you see between the content of the course in which you are enrolled (or previous courses you have taken) and the service activities you are doing?

What have you learned about yourself from your service-learning experience?

What was the most challenging thing that you have experienced so far? What did you learn from this experience?

What changes would you recommend in how your service site operates and how the service-learning experience is structured?

Rate yourself 1 (low) to 10 (high) for your performance.

Why did you rate yourself the way you did?