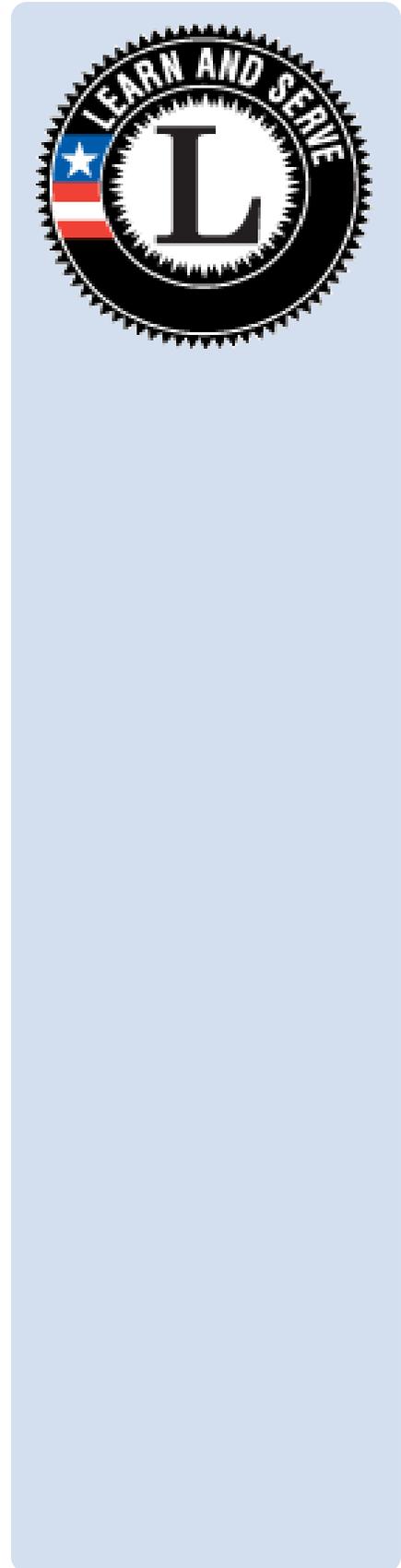


Service~Learning:

An approach to active learning



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Office of Service-Learning

Dear Students, Faculty/Staff, and Community Partners,

Welcome to our service-learning guide!

The community of students, faculty/staff, and community partners already involved in service-learning at Morehead State University invites you to join in service-learning opportunities through a variety of course offerings, student fellowships, faculty funding, and multi-media resources. For more information about service-learning please contact:

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Included in Service-Learning guide...

- Definitions
- Experiential Learning Theory
- Benefits of Service-Learning/Engagement
- Three Steps to Service-Learning
- Composing a Syllabus
- Outcomes of Service-Learning
- How to Assess Service-Learning
- Places to Publish

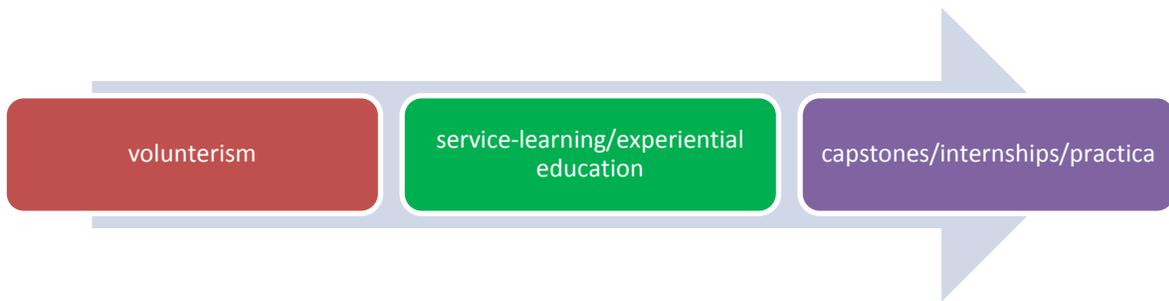
Appendices:

- Appendix A: Service-Learning Project Ideas
- Appendix B: Learning Contract
- Appendix C: Suggested Reading

We can...

- Provide resources for faculty to integrate service-learning into a course.
- Assists faculty and students in identifying and implementing service projects.
- Refer faculty and students to educational and community agencies for possible service sites.
- Train students interested in service-learning.
- Assist faculty in developing reflection activities for service-learning courses.
- Serve as a liaison between the community agency, faculty, and students.
- Assist faculty in assessing service-learning and collecting relevant data.
- Recognize and reward students and faculty for participating in service-learning.

Regional Engagement (Stewardship) Continuum



Definitions...

What is volunteerism?

VOLUNTEERISM is the opportunity to engage as a community member and citizen with and in service to other members of a given community in an effort to make the world a better place.

(idealist.org/kt/voloverview.html)

What is Service-Learning?

SERVICE-LEARNING is a form of intentional, experiential learning. These educational experiences fulfill the learning goals of academic courses while strengthening community assets and addressing community needs. The students reflect on their service activities to gain a deeper understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, improved critical thinking skills and an enhanced sense of values and civic responsibility. The college and community partners engage in ongoing assessment to foster a stewardship of place. (Service-Learning Task Force, 2006).

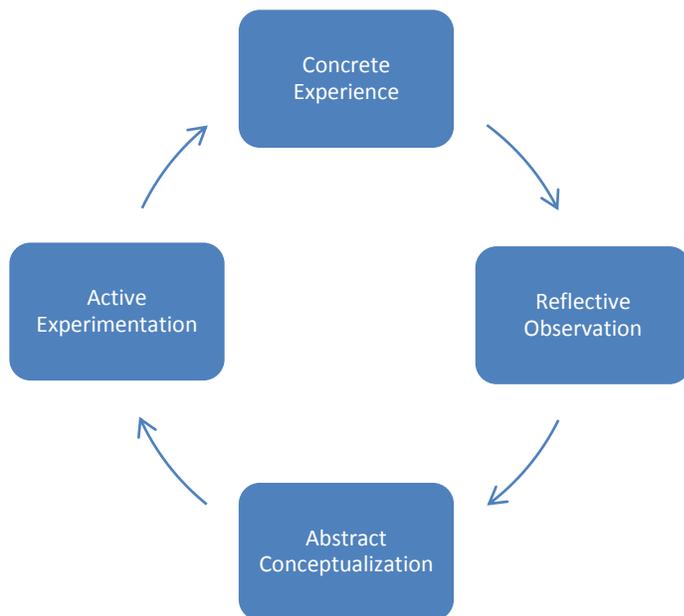
What is Engagement?

ENGAGEMENT is a form of intentional, experiential learning. These educational experiences fulfill the learning goals of academic courses while strengthening community assets and addressing community needs. The students reflect on their engagement activities to gain a deeper understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, improved critical thinking skills and an enhanced sense of values and civic responsibility. The students, faculty, and/or other partners engage in ongoing assessment to foster a stewardship of place. (Engagement Learning Community Final Report, 2011).

What is Regional Engagement?

- It is a partnership between MSU and an external agency/constituency.
- It addresses a mutual need, how to address the need, and accountability.
- It involves resources from all partners.
- It is tied to specific outcomes.
- It needs to be measurable.
- It should cut across the triad of teaching, research, and service.

Experiential Learning Theory



Experiential learning can be viewed as a cycle with four interrelated stages which emphasize the process of learning as opposed to the outcomes of learning. The purpose of education is seen as stimulation of inquiry rather than merely the accumulation of facts.

Service-Learning facilitates the learner to move around the learning cycle by placing responsibility on the students to comprehend, accomplish, and integrate in order to complete the process.

Stages of Learning

Concrete Experience

Reflective Observation

Abstract Conceptualization

Active Experimentation

Preferred Learning Situations

Learning from new experiences, games, role plays, discussion, peer feedback

Lectures, observation, seeing different perspectives (brain storming), objective tests

Theory readings, study time alone, clear presentation of ideas

Small group discussion, projects, practice and feedback, self-paced activities

Benefits of Service-Learning/Engagement

Our service-learning program at Morehead State University is designed to benefit the students, the university and the community. It is the crucial goal of all service projects to identify and address a real community need. In order for students to have the most meaningful experience possible, the service task should engage him/her in an authentic experience with an actual community problem. Addressing community needs through service is what brings the real world into the classroom. If the service proposal is not based on meeting a community need, then the experience will not lend itself to practical application later in the student's career. Also, community agencies and organizations need to focus their energy on the service they provide. Therefore, students doing a project that was not beneficial to the community would not be a service, but a hindrance to the agency. Projects should be planned that will be equally beneficial to the community and the student.

Students:

- Gain hands-on experience
- Increase your academic understanding
- Develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills

Faculty/Staff:

- Promote active learning; engage students with different learning styles
- Add new insights to class discussion
- Lead to new avenues for research and publication

Community Partners:

- Increase public awareness of key issues
- Reach out to young adults; organizations' future employees, clientele, and supporters
- Help prepare today's students to be tomorrow's civic leaders

Resources:

- **National Service Learning Clearinghouse:** <http://www.servicelearning.org/>
- **Campus Compact:** <http://www.compact.org/>

Three Steps to Service-Learning

Step One: Planning

During the planning stage of service-learning, students identify a community need and design (or choose) a plan which will provide the community with meaningful assistance to address that need. Students may acquire a list of service project options from their professor or Service-Learning Coordinator. After the student has identified a project, he/she must then become familiar with the policies and procedures of that organization or agency and agree to adhere to those regulations. The information about the agency may be found at the agency itself or within the files of the Service-Learning Coordinator. The service-learner will then complete the Service-Learning Contract and officially document his/her intentions of completing the service experience. The student will also have the opportunity to complete any of the optional planning documents to prepare him or her for the service experience.

Many agencies require criminal background checks, volunteer liability insurance, and health screenings. These must be completed prior to initiating your community service. Those unable to fulfill these pre-service requirements may have limited options for placement, however, may negotiate alternative service-learning experiences. Contact the Service-Learning Coordinator to get information about the agencies which require these procedures and to learn how you can complete these requirements. It is the student's responsibility to secure necessary criminal background checks, health screenings, or volunteer liability insurance. The Service-Learning Coordinator of Morehead State University is not responsible for securing this information.

Step Two: Action

During the action stage, the service-learner is engaged in service which relates to coursework and meets an actual community need. Service-learners are expected to be prompt and appropriately dressed for the experience. Appropriate behavior is expected and required from all of the individuals involved with the service-learning program. In the case of illness or emergency, the student should contact the agency immediately so that arrangements can be made for your absence. The student is also responsible for contacting the Service-Learning Coordinator to notify her/him about the situation.

Please sign in and out each day as you begin and end your service. This information allows the agency to keep track of the hours you are serving their clients.

Step 3: Reflection

Each student engaged in service-learning should complete some type of formal reflection activity. This gives the learner the opportunity to develop his/her understanding of the service experience and recognize what was gained through the opportunity. The type of reflection activity is determined by the professor of the student who participated in service-learning. Reflection may take the form of reflective journals, group discussions, self assessments, special projects or any form the service-learner may choose. This activity should be reported to the Service-Learning Coordinator as well as given to the professor for credit.

Hourly service logs provide the Service-Learning Coordinator with valuable information in documentation and affect the program's ability to award you with the accurate amount of credit for your experience. We ask that you complete all forms necessary to keep our records accurate.

Composing a Syllabus

Incorporating Service-Learning into a Course

- I. Select one of your classes.
- II. Establish course learning objectives.
- III. Choose one or two course learning objectives.
 - a. Connect learning objectives to the community.
 - b. Identify an activity for each objective.
 - c. Identify a community group or specific community project that incorporates each activity.
- IV. Create a syllabus to connect with the course and service-learning.
 - a. Ask yourself whether you want service-learning to be optional or required.
 - b. Establish how you will communicate the significance of service-learning.
- V. Develop a service-learning statement that can be incorporated into your syllabus.
- VI. Establish evaluation criteria.
 - a. How will you give credit?
 - b. Does the credit match the intensity of the service-learning project?
 - c. How will you evaluate each item of reflection and application?
 - d. What will your grading scale be?
 - e. Will you require a specified number of hours? If so, how many hours?
 - f. Will students write a proposal to describe their service-learning project? If so, will you provide a list of possible options? Will you assign a pre-designed service-learning project?
 - g. Will all students be required to complete a service-learning project, or will you offer alternative assignments for those not choosing to participate in service-learning?
 - h. How may students make up missed hours?
 - i. How will students demonstrate what they have learned from their service-learning project?
 - j. What type of reflection will follow completion of service-learning projects?
 - k. Will class time be used for reflection? If so, how much time?
- VII. Develop and include in your syllabus an evaluation statement.
- VIII. Define service-learning. Consider attaching an article describing service-learning to your syllabus. (Of course, permission to copy articles for this purpose must be granted).
- IX. Inform students about registering for a co-curricular service certificate.

Outcomes of Service-Learning

To Prepare Better Citizens

Students who participate in community service are likely to have a better understanding of their communities, challenge their prejudices, expand their view of culture and society, develop more realistic attitudes about citizen involvement, and be more prepared to take leadership roles in their communities in the future. Instructors and administrators are more likely to see themselves and their institution as partners in the local community and to foster that attitude in the students.

To Meet Community Needs

Educational institutions are in a position to have major impacts on real needs in their neighborhoods. Given the diversity of expertise of faculty and the resources available for research and study, the communities are likely to gain immensely from the focus of inquiry based on their needs. An example would be a faculty member in Nutrition Science organizing students and faculty to study nutritional deficiencies of a local population and to make recommendation for improving diet. Thus, a more studied approach to service enhances the service provided.

To Foster Partnerships

Community and education partnerships can be formed for mutually beneficial uses of resources. Instructors and students from diverse disciplines can join together on community research or service to learn collaboration, to learn how the areas of study are similar, diverse, or interrelated, and provide a more stable framework for educational sustainability.

To Add Value to the Role of Students

Many students are at a stage in their lives where they are seeking a purpose and want to understand their role in society. Service-learning provides individuals with a way to move into the center of community issues, to be a part of the solution rather than the problem and to develop a sense of personal worth.

To Enhance Learning

Service-Learning is a teaching method which can stimulate creative thinking, problem solving, and critical thinking. Students who are engaged in service are more likely to develop skills such as critical reflection, analysis, synthesis, integration, application, and comprehension as well as to become more open-minded about others' ideas, and to be more engaged in their learning process.

Appendix A: Service-Learning Project Ideas

Education and Behavioral Sciences:

- Provide one-on-one help for special equestrian and swimming programs
- Serve as mentor for at-risk students
- Volunteer to work with prisoners and their children
- Serve as big brother/big sister for children needing positive role models
- Tutor in academic areas
- Volunteer to help with Special Olympics
- Assist individuals in nursing homes and special education centers
- Tutor at the Adult Learning Center
- Read to people who need assistance or work with the adult literacy program
- Assist school-age youth to develop service and volunteer skills
- Assist in a classroom or alternative high school

Performing and Fine Arts:

- Assist community theater groups
- Teach students how to play an instrument or create a piece of art work
- Teach dance, voice, or other fine arts skills to students
- Help set up an art exhibit
- Serve as a tour guide at a museum
- Chaperon or coach a speech or drama team
- Play music in a school setting

Business:

- Provide clerical or other services for a budding small business
- Join a local civic group and head a project for the community

Environmental and Medical Sciences:

- Tend to animals at dog pound and veterinarian office
- Adopt-a-mile clean-up
- Help plant flowers and trees in your community
- Help with a science fair

- Maintain grounds in state and national park area
- Welcome visitors to hospitals or serve as a volunteer aid
- Volunteer at county health agency

Recreation and Physical Education:

- Build facilities and/or repair equipment at a local park
- Coach a sport for a community league
- Volunteer as a life guard
- Help maintain the grounds at a local recreation area or park
- Assist at a local therapy center

Government, History and Geography:

- Help register voters
- Restore historical sites
- Compile and organize historical documents
- Organize a clean-up campaign in the community
- Serve as a tour guide at historical sites
- Design maps for...?

Several ideas for service-learning are listed above. However, the opportunities are endless! When you come into the office, we will help you to customize a project that applies to what you are learning in your courses and meet a community need that you are concerned about. Service-learning is not limited, so you can design your own project.

Service-learning is an excellent choice for professors, because it increases a student's understanding of the material by giving the opportunity to apply the concepts! Service-learning can be done individually, in teams, or as a class.

Appendix B: Learning Contract

Service-Learning Plan and Agreement Form

SERVICE-LEARNING is a form of intentional, experiential learning. These educational experiences fulfill the learning goals of academic courses while strengthening community assets and addressing community needs. The students reflect on their service activities to gain a deeper understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, improved critical thinking skills and an enhanced sense of values and civic responsibility. The college and community partners engage in ongoing assessment to foster a stewardship of place. (Service-Learning Task Force, 2006).

Course Title and Number:

Professor's Contact Information:

Professor's name:

Professor's contact number(s):

Professor's email:

Professor's office hours:

What is the best way to reach the professor? When?

Community Partner Contact Information:

Organization name:

Community Partner contact person name:

Community Partner contact person number(s):

Community Partner contact person email:

What is the best way to reach the community partner? When?

Appendix B: Learning Contract (continued)

Student Contact Information:

Note: if this is a group project, please use additional space to list the contact information for all students in the group. If one student will be the main contact with the community partner, please identify that student.

Student's name:

Student's contact number(s):

Student's email:

What is the best way to reach the student? When?

All partners – faculty, students, and community partners – should be aware of the answers to each of these questions. However, it may make more sense for each partner to answer the questions as indicated. The questions should be completed using as much additional space as needed.

Questions for Community Partner:

1. Has the community partner received a copy of the course syllabus? ___ Yes ___ No
2. Describe the training, orientation, and supervision that the community partner will provide for the student(s).
3. List any particular guidelines (i.e., behavior, dress, confidentiality) that the student should know about the community partner organization.

Questions for the Student(s):

4. In a short paragraph, please describe the service-learning project. If a specific product or outcome is a goal, please identify and describe it (i.e., a brochure, a community presentation, a summary report).
5. What academic knowledge or skills will the student(s) use as they participate in this project? (You can also list course objectives that will be achieved by the service-learning project in this space.)
6. Describe the reflection activities that will connect the service-learning project with academic learning goals. Identify how students, community partners and professor will be involved in these reflection activities.
7. Please provide a timeline of tasks related to the service-learning project, including estimated completion dates. For each student, list responsibilities and tasks related to the service-learning project.

Questions for the Professor:

8. Describe the communication with the community partner and the supervision of the student that the professor will provide during the service-learning project.

This Service-Learning Project Agreement acknowledges the agreement among the student(s), community partner, and course professor about the objectives, processes, and responsibilities related to this project. This Agreement will be the baseline for evaluating the student's completion of the Service-Learning Project requirement of the course. This Agreement may be amended, if all parties agree.

Student Signature

Date

Community Partner Signature

Date

Professor Signature

Date

Appendix C: Suggested Reading

Service-Learning

- Hatcher, J., & Bringle, R. (September 07, 2009). Innovative Practices in Service-Learning and Curricular Engagement. *New Directions for Higher Education, 2009*, 147, 37-46.
- Heffernan, K. (2001). *Fundamentals of service-learning course construction*. Providence, RI: Campus Compact.
- Zlotkowski, E. (Ed) *AAHE Series on Service Learning in the Disciplines*. This series includes books on over 20 disciplines, with chapters in each book written by academics from that discipline who use service-learning in their teaching.
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Civic Engagement and Service-Learning

- Battistoni, R. M. (2002). *Civic engagement across the curriculum: A resource book for service-learning faculty in all disciplines*. Providence, RI: Campus Compact.
- This volume offers faculty in all disciplines rationales and resources for connecting their service-learning efforts to the broader goals of civic engagement. It provides concrete examples of course materials, exercises, and assignments that can be used to develop students' civic capacities regardless of disciplinary area.
- Bridgman, M., Shreve, J., White, L., Heaviside, M., Dunshee, L., & O'Loughlin, J. Encouraging civic engagement on college campuses through discussion boards. *Journal for Civic Commitment*, Issue 4, Article 3. Retrieved June 8, 2009, from <http://www.mc.maricopa.edu/other/engagement/Journal/Issue4/OloughlinBrooks.pdf>
- Recent years have witnessed a decline in civic engagement among college students. Young people display a consistent lack of knowledge of American government, while others feel apathy towards the process of democracy. Within the last few years, the importance of civic engagement has been heavily emphasized. This article focuses on the use of student "discussion boards" as a tool for measuring civic engagement on college campuses.
- Campus Compact. (2003). *Introduction to service-learning toolkit: Readings and resources for faculty* (2nd ed.). Providence, RI: Campus Compact.
- This revised edition brings together the best, most up-to-date writing and resources on service-learning, from learning theory and pedagogy to practical guidance on how to implement service-learning in the classroom. This edition reflects the tremendous growth in service-learning that has occurred since the first *Toolkit* was published in 2000. In addition to updated material throughout, this volume includes expanded chapters on community partnerships, student development, and redesigning curriculum, as well as two new chapters—one exploring the connection between service-learning and civic engagement and the other focusing on community-based research.
- Eyler, J. (2005). Academic service learning for effective civic engagement. *Diversity Digest*, 9(1), 16-17.
- These students' musings on their service-learning experience capture some of the ways academic service learning prepares students for civic engagement. Academic service learning that links community service projects to course subject matter not only motivates students to learn, but also provides experiences that facilitate the development of attitudes, skills, and intellectual abilities necessary for effective civic engagement. Retrieved June 5, 2009, from <http://www.diversityweb.org/Digest/vol9no1/eyler.cfm>