

In the city, for the city.

ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING MANUAL



PREPARATION



APPLICATION



EDUCATION

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Academic Service Learning Overview

Service-learning is fundamentally an academic endeavor in which service is an integrated component of a course. It is a credit-bearing, experiential education approach that involves an established community partnership guided by the expertise of professors and community-based practitioners, working together with students to address community needs. The partnerships between Warner Pacific College and the community engage students in service primarily with nonprofit organizations, local public schools, and under-resourced agencies. Community partnerships are strategically developed so as to live out the urban mission of Warner Pacific. Academic service-learning is a unique form of engaged learning that incorporates:

- Direct contact between students and the community, exposing students to real-world environments and challenges
- Engagement in projects and activities that are devoted to the public good and positive community development
- Service projects that are mutually beneficial for both WP students and the community
- Service activities that directly connect to learning outcomes of the course, thereby enriching course content
- Structured reflection that enhances student understanding of connections between course content and service

As part of our urban mission, Warner Pacific affirms the importance of engaged learning and supports pedagogies that work towards our goal of preparing civic leaders who will transform society through acts of faith, scholarship and service. In working toward this end, academic service-learning seeks to enrich course content and learning objectives while promoting increased self-awareness, greater personal efficacy, informed critical thinking, and a deeper understanding of societal responsibility, diversity, and the urban environment.

:: why SERVICE LEARNING?

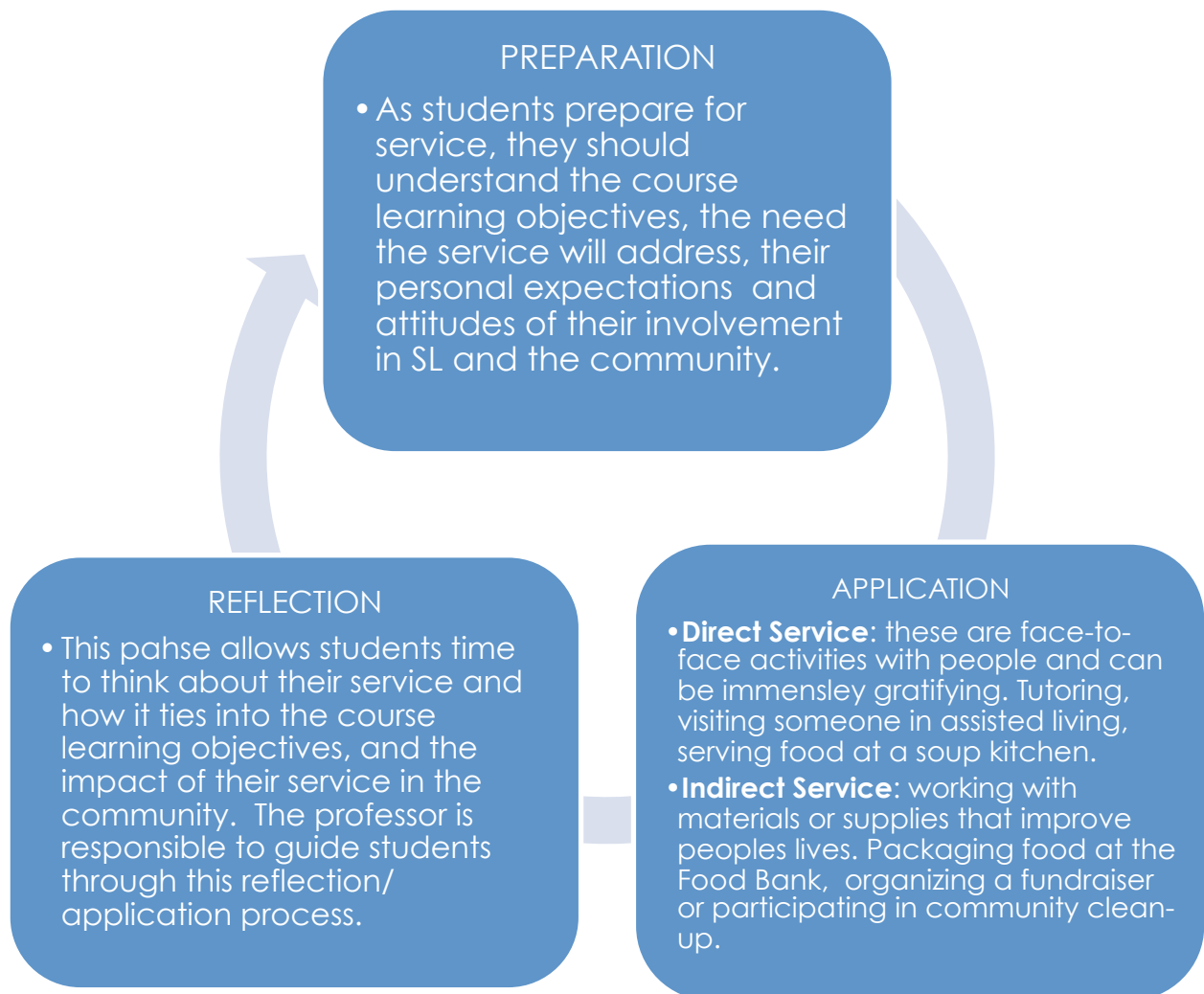
- Links course-work to real life
- Contributes to positive exposure in the community
- Provides students with greater understanding of social issues
- Develops potential job contacts for students, or on-going volunteer opportunities
- Creates ways to expand service offered for our community partners
- Exposes our community to the emerging generation of students/young adults workers

:: who to contact

Office for Service Learning: 503.517.1088

Phases of Service Learning

:: holistic EDUCATION



SL- Checklist

:: now that your interested in integrating SL in your Course

- _____ Complete the Academic Service-Learning Course Information form. This form provides details to the Service-Learning Coordinator (SLC) in regard to course objectives and needs.
- _____ Meet with the SLC to discuss your course and brainstorm possible placements, integration ideas, reflection activities, etc. See page 10 for example *Syllabi information*.
- _____ The SLC will begin contacting interested agencies and communicating your needs with them.
- _____ Once agencies have been contacted, you will receive an email from the SLC with a description of the agencies and service experiences, contact information and the number of students they can accommodate. The SLC will help you determine the best course partners.
- _____ 2-3 weeks prior to the start of classes, the SLC will contact you to schedule a brief service-learning presentation, which provides general information, agency placement process and tips for successful SL experiences to your class. (This is an optional resource.)
- _____ During the first week of classes, you will receive the Service-Learning Contract, to be signed by the students (once they have chosen or been assigned to their agency), the agency representative, and you.
- _____ The SLC will serve as a point of contact between your students and the agency should challenges arise.
- _____ You will receive an optional assessment and reflection resources, to be filled out by students and returned to the service-learning office.

Connect course content with SL

To facilitate an effective Service Learning experience in your course, here are a few things you may consider:

- Actively seek out ways to relate the course content with practical and theoretical experiences for students. I.e. consider their career goals and declared Majors. Is this a general-education course or a Major-required course?

General Education: students may engage in individual activities within the community partner base. They may get a general-ed experience to introduce them to a variety of community needs & resources.

Major-Related: Social Problems and Public Policy course students may divide into subject-groups and visit agencies to have first-hand experience working with the social-problem of their interest.

- Your course should have clearly defined Service-Learning objectives. Keep in mind that we want students to learn FROM the community partner about the population of people they serve and resources they provide the community.
- Manage your student expectations early; set clear parameters for communicating and working with community partners, and communicate deadlines throughout the semester.
- Include ample resources and time for students to reflect on their SL experience as it relates to the course content. Select ONE reflection-tool that will best integrate with your course syllabi and assignments. (see page 8)
- Be purposeful in creating classroom norms and learning strategies that will enhance academic learning and encourage service-learning.
- The SLC is always available to provide resources and extra support for facilitating the SL component of the class. Consider inviting the SLC to the class for a discussion on “*why is academic SL important?*”

Reflection Resources

:: Connect SERVICE with LEARNING

We believe that an effective Service-Learning course will offer time and resources to reflection that will connect the student's experiences with the course content. It's simple; 1 2 3 steps to reflection:

1. Offer students opportunity to understand the course learning objectives as they relate to the in-class learning and out-of-class experiences.
2. Utilize the Service-Learning contract from the Office for Service-Learning; this will encourage students to reflect on what they are expected to do for the course, and how to connect the experience with their studies.
3. Choose one or two of the following reflection activities. Commit to using one reflection tool, or we suggest utilizing a Journaling activity WITH an Essay or Group Reflections.

The content for the following activities are taken from the *"Tried and True Teaching Methods to Enhance Students' Service-Learning Experience"* compiled by Professor Diane Sloan (Miami Dade Community College) and based on the work of Julie Hatcher and Robert Bringle in *"Reflection Activities for the College Classroom (Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis)*. Copy of this document can be obtained from the OSL.

Journaling:

- **Personal Journal** - Students will write freely about their experience. This is usually done weekly. These personal journals may be submitted periodically to the instructor, or kept as a reference to use at the end of the experience when putting together an academic essay reflecting their experience. (Hatcher, 1996)
- **Three-part Journal** - Students are asked to divide each page of their journal into thirds, and write weekly entries during the semester. In the top section, students describe some aspect of the service experience. In the middle of the page, they are asked to analyze how course content relates to the service experience. And finally, an application section prompts students to comment on how the experience and course content can be applied to their personal or professional life. (Bringle, 1996)

Essays:

- **Reflective Essays** - Essay questions are provided at the beginning of the semester and students are expected to submit two to three essays during the term. Reflective essays can focus on personal development, academic connections to the course content, or ideas and recommendations for future action.

- **Experiential Research Paper** - An experiential research paper asks students to identify a particular experience at the service site and analyzes that experience within the broader context of the course in order to make recommendations for change. Mid-semester, students are asked to identify an underlying social issue they have encountered at the service site. Students then research the social issue and read three to five articles on the topic. Based on their experience and library research, students make recommendations for future action. This reflection activity is useful in inter-disciplinary interests and expertise to pursue issues experienced at the service site. Class presentations of the experiential research paper can culminate semester work. (Julie Hatcher, IUPUI)

Group Reflections:

- **Structured Class Discussions** - Structured reflection sessions can be facilitated during regular class time if all students are involved in service. It is helpful for students to hear stories of success from one another. They can also offer advice and collaborate to identify solutions to problems encountered at the service site.
- **Small Group Discussions** - This is a simple alternative to full-class reflection sessions when you really want students to have a maximum amount of time to talk individually.
- **E-mail Discussion Groups** - Through e-mail, students can create a dialogue with the instructor and peers involved in service projects. Students write weekly summaries and identify critical incidents that occurred at the service site. Students can rotate as a moderator of the discussion every two weeks. Instructors can post questions for consideration and topics for directed writings. A log can be printed to provide data about group learning's that occurred from the service experience.
- **Class Presentations** - A way for students to share their service-learning experience with peers is to make a class presentation through a video, slide show, bulletin board, panel discussion, or a persuasive speech. This is an opportunity for students to display their work in public format. A similar presentation can be offered to the community agency as a final recognition of the students' involvement.

Students-what to expect

:: expectations for STUDENTS

As students sign-up for your SL course, they may not be aware of the expectations come with the Service-Learning component. We suggest that you include the following information in your course syllabi. **Schedule an appointment to talk with the Service Learning Coordinator and personalize your SL information.*

:: a student CHECKLIST

- _____ Search for current service opportunities on the website, or visit the OSL for a listing of up-coming options. **ALL** service-placements need to be with approved Community Partners.
- _____ Choose an agency and volunteer opportunity that matches your interests, your schedule, and course requirements. If you cannot find a 'matching opportunity', the student should contact the Service Learning Coordinator (x1088), early in the semester.
- _____ Contact the agency directly to discuss and arrange a time for you to serve.
- _____ Fill out the service-learning contract for community partners, including your learning objectives, and bring it to your agency the first day of service.
- _____ Maintain a log of your service hours and return your contract to the professor at the end of the semester.
- _____ Communicate with your agency about your days of service, including your final day. Be sure to thank the staff you worked with for the learning opportunity!
- _____ Complete all reflection and course activities given by your professor.
- _____ If you are using these service hours for your Faith & Service Commitment, you are responsible to submit your hours online. The SL Contract will not be used to log hours.

:: FAQ's

What if I am having trouble finding a SL placement?

1. First, visit the OSL and look through a listing of current service opportunities.
2. If you cannot find a 'match', than you may contact an agency listed as a WP Community Partner and see if they have additional service opportunities.

Can I fulfill my SL requirements through a place not listed as a WP Community Partner?

1. Please do not. You may consult the Service Learning Coordinator for permission to pursue an alternative placement IF you have reason to pursue an alternative option.

:: PROTOCOL- contacting your service-site

1. **DON'T** wait until the last minute to start your SL hours. Begin searching the first two weeks of the semester, and begin your SL hours by the end of the first month.
 - Choose at least 3 agencies to contact in case one does not work out.
 - Work with others in you SL team to determine service times/days.
2. **DO** ask about trainings/orientation with your agency. Be aware that there may be limited days to join a group training session.
3. **You may** be required to complete a background check.
4. Be able to **articulate** what your course objectives are for working at your chosen site.
5. **Practice** phone etiquette: speak clearly and slowly leaving you name and phone number TWICE in a message. Use this guide to help you: *"Hi, my name is _____and I'm a Service-Learning student at Warner Pacific College in Portland. I'm interested in volunteering at your agency. Please call me at _-____ between the hours of __ and__ or you may reach me at_-____. Thank you for your time. Sincerely, _____."*
6. **Choose** an agency that sincerely interests you (personally and academically).

:: tips for getting the most from your experience

- **DO** ask for an orientation or introduction to the agency from your assigned supervisor. Ask about the mission, history and population of people they serve.
- **Familiarize** yourself with the agencies policies and procedures and show respect the others at your site.
- **DO** establish your specific responsibilities and expectations with your supervisor on the first visit.
- **DO** ask for help from staff or your supervisor when in doubt of what you should do.
- **ALWAYS** be punctual. In fact, it's better to be 5-10 minutes early every time.
- **ALWAYS** be aware that you are representing Warner Pacific College.
- **DO** know that if you are having trouble at your service site you should talk with your professor about it.
- **DON'T** go alone with an individual behind closed doors at your service site.
- **DON'T** make promises or commitments you cannot keep with the service site or clients.
- **NEVER** use your own vehicle to provide services to the organization.
- **DON'T** wear expensive jewelry or clothing, etc when performing your service.

:: Service-Learning Contract instructions

Every SL student will receive a SL Contract form the Service-Learning Coordinator at the beginning of the Semester. IF you do not have one, or need a replacement copy, visit the Office for Service Learning in Smith 216.

- The contract is to be completed after the student has received the required training from the service site. The student is expected to have a conversation with a person who will act as their "site supervisor" or the person who is giving them instruction for their volunteer work.
- The student will complete the course objectives and personal learning objectives section.
- The Agency Activities section should be completed by the site supervisor, OR it may be filled out by the student with the supervisor's permission.

- The Integration plan will be complete by the student. Signatures must be gathered from the student, site supervisor, and course Professor.
- The SL student will keep the contract until they have completed their final day of service with the agency.
- The Contract will be turned in first, to the professor.
- Any concerns or questions concerning the site placement and SL Contract should first be directed toward the course professor, and then to the SLC in Smith 216.

Enjoy your Service-Learning experience!

-Office for Service-Learning & Civic Engagement