SERVICE-LEARNING FACULTY TUTORIAL
The goal of this tutorial is to provide both new and experienced faculty with a solid understanding of the educational pedagogy of service-learning. This tutorial will cover:

- Theoretical underpinnings of the pedagogy
- Definition of what constitutes service-learning as a method for teaching and learning
- Benefits of service-learning
- Various common models
- How to develop a rigorous and quality service-learning course
- Logistical considerations
- Additional resources
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.

-Learn and Serve America National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
To clarify the conceptualization for academic service-learning, as well as to distinguish it from other community-based service and learning models, we begin with four common misunderstandings about this pedagogy.

**Myth # 1 - The Myth of Terminology:**

*Academic service-learning is the same as student community service and co-curricular service-learning.*

While sharing the word "service," these models of student involvement in the community are distinguished by their learning agenda. Student community service, illustrated by a student organization adopting a local elementary school, rarely involves a learning agenda. In contrast, both forms of service-learning - academic and co-curricular make intentional efforts to engage students in planned and purposeful learning related to the service experiences. Co-curricular service-learning, illustrated by many alternative spring break programs, is concerned with raising students' consciousness and familiarity with issues related to various communities. Academic service-learning, illustrated by student community service integrated into an academic course, *utilizes the service experience as a course "text" for both academic learning and civic learning.*

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**Myth # 2 - The Myth of Conceptualization:**

*Academic service-learning is just a new name for internships.*

Many internship programs, especially those involving community service, are now referring to themselves as service-learning programs, as if the two pedagogical models were the same. While internships and academic service-learning involve students in the community to accentuate or supplement students' academic learning, generally speaking, internships are not about **civic learning**. They develop and socialize students for a profession, and tend to be silent on student civic development. They also emphasize student benefits more than **community benefits**, while service-learning is equally attentive to both.

To clarify the conceptualization for academic service-learning, as well as to distinguish it from other community-based service and learning models, we begin with four common misunderstandings about this pedagogy.

**Myth # 3 - The Myth of Synonymy:**

*Experience, such as in the community, is synonymous with learning.*

Experience and learning are not the same. While experience is a necessary condition of learning (Kolb, 1984), it is not sufficient. Learning requires more than experience, and so one cannot assume that student involvement in the community automatically yields learning. Harvesting academic and/or civic learning from a community service experience requires purposeful and intentional efforts. This harvesting process is often referred to as "reflection" in the service-learning literature.
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**Myth # 4 - The Myth of Marginality:**

*Academic service-learning is the addition of community service to a traditional course.*

Grafting a community service requirement (or option) onto an otherwise unchanged academic course does not constitute academic service-learning. While such models abound, this interpretation marginalizes the learning in, from, and with the community, and precludes transforming students' community experiences into learning. To realize service-learning's full potential as a pedagogy, community experiences must be considered in the context of, and integrated with, the other planned learning strategies and resources in the course.

Relevant and Meaningful Service with the Community:
Service that is relevant to the community and to the content of the academic course, meaningful to the community and to the students, and developed and formulated with the community.

Enhanced Academic Learning:
Learning that is advanced through an experiential learning activity which either complements or adds to more traditional methods of teaching.

Purposeful Civic Learning:
Learning that contributes to preparing students for community or public involvement in a diverse democratic society, while also preparing students with the knowledge, skills, values, and propensities necessary for such involvement.
ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF QUALITY SERVICE-LEARNING

RELEVANT AND MEANINGFUL SERVICE WITH THE COMMUNITY

ENHANCED ACADEMIC LEARNING

PURPOSEFUL CIVIC LEARNING

ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING
BENEFITS OF SERVICE-LEARNING

JWU is committed to providing “an exceptional education that inspires professional success” and to graduate students who have “the attributes and skills to excel as professionals and lead purposeful lives.” Service-Learning is a value added component of a JWU education that provides key academic and professional learning outcomes across a variety of programs and disciplines. It not only provides faculty with a valuable tool to engage students as active learners and reinvigorate the classroom, it also addresses employers’ desire to hire graduates who have “real life” experience in their field and are able to demonstrate the skills and expertise necessary to contribute immediately in the workplace.

Service-Learning supports JWU’s Mission to offer “an exceptional education that inspires professional success and lifelong personal and intellectual growth,” and its Guiding Principles of “enriching academic programs with experiential and work-integrated learning,” “offering relevant programs that maximize student potential” and “modeling and developing ethical behavior and local, national and global citizenship,” in the following ways:
Faculty Benefits

- Achieve course and program outcomes by providing hands on skill development; make learning relevant; authentic learning/problem-solving opportunities; increase students’ ability to apply course content in “real life” settings.
- Energize and motivate students with the real impact of their course projects; increase engagement in the course content and satisfaction with their learning experiences.
- Enrich the teaching and learning process, reinvigorate the classroom.
- New areas for research and scholarship.
- Interdisciplinary collaboration and networking with other faculty and client partners.
- Opportunities for increased professional and industry visibility and recognition.
- Increase connections with students, which plays an important role in retention.
Benefits for Students

By providing opportunities for the “real life” application of course knowledge and observation of course principles at work in the “real world,” service-learning participants have increased:

- Motivation, engagement in course content and a deeper understanding of the context and relevance of academic content.
- Opportunity to practice and hone industry-specific and “soft” skills (leadership, problem-solving, communication, time management) for real client partners.
- Gain civic role models; greater understanding of the root causes of complex social and economic issues; work collaboratively with people from different ethnic, racial and cultural backgrounds; valuable global learning and broadened perspectives on issues of diversity, multiculturalism and socio-economic challenges locally and globally.
- Gain confidence, self-esteem, and increased sense of self-efficacy; develop and demonstrate personal skills such as emotional intelligence, resilience and persistence, patience, adaptability and flexibility, initiative, and creativity.
- Documentation and materials for career portfolio; real life work examples for resume and interviews; opportunities to learn about different career sectors and networking for potential future employment opportunities.
These projects provide energy, expertise and “deliverables” that community-based organizations would not be able to afford through additional paid staff or consultants. It also increases the potential pool of volunteers and/or staff, since some students may consider continuing to volunteer or pursuing internship or staff positions at the organizations once they have learned about the mission and connected with the organization’s leadership.
MODELS OF SERVICE-LEARNING

"Pure" Service-Learning

These are courses that send students out into the community to serve. These courses have as their intellectual core the idea of service to communities by students, volunteers or engaged citizens. They are not typically lodged in any one discipline.

Examples of Pure Service-Learning

In this model, students are expected to serve regularly in the community during the term and reflect on their experiences on a regular basis throughout the semester using course content as a basis for their analysis and understanding.

Additional examples of Discipline-Based Service-Learning

At JWU, Discipline-Based Service-Learning takes place in a variety of subject areas. Examples include Environmental Science students collecting and analyzing water samples for a pollution study or Counseling Psychology students assisting with a youth development afterschool program.
According to this model, students (or teams of students) relate to the community much as ‘consultants’ working for a ‘client.’ Students work with community members to understand a particular community problem or need. This model presumes that the students will have some knowledge they can draw upon to make recommendations to the community or develop a solution to the problem; architecture students might design a park; business students might develop a website; or botany students might identify non-native plants and suggest eradication methods.

At JWU, Problem-Based Service-Learning is often referred to as the consultant model and takes place in a variety of disciplines. Examples include Technical Writing students drafting a recommendation report or Digital Media students creating a new logo for a nonprofit organization.

Additional examples of problem-based service-learning
These courses are generally designed for majors and minors in a given discipline and are offered almost exclusively to students in their final year. Capstone courses ask students to draw upon the knowledge they have obtained throughout their course work and combine it with relevant service work in the community. The goal of capstone courses is usually either exploring a new topic or synthesizing students’ understanding of their discipline. These courses offer an excellent way to help students transition from the world of theory to the world of practice by helping them make professional contacts and gather personal experience.

Directed Work Experience (DWE) projects provide students with a capstone opportunity for the application of acquired skills and knowledge in a supervised, unpaid industry setting. Through DWEs, students apply expertise developed in the classroom to a real-world product or project that will help local community-based organizations (CBOs) meet their service or business goals.

Additional Examples of Service-Learning in Capstone Courses
As in traditional internships, students are generally charged with producing a body of work that is of value to the community or site. However, unlike traditional internships, service internships have regular and on-going reflective opportunities that help students analyze their new experiences using discipline-based theories. These reflective opportunities can be done with small groups of peers, with one-on-one meetings with faculty advisors, or even electronically with a faculty member providing feedback. Service internships are further distinguished from traditional internships by their focus on reciprocity: the idea that the community and the student benefit equally from the experience.

JWU has a robust internship program that has been operating since the early 1970’s. This program has always included students interning regularly in nonprofits. Internships take place in various segments of the nonprofit sector, including: corrections/police, healthcare, counseling, arts and culture, government, human services, education, foundations and public charities.

Additional Examples of Service-Learning Internships
A relatively new approach that is gaining popularity, community-based action research is similar to an independent study option for the rare student who is highly experienced in community work. Community-based action research can also be effective with small classes or groups of students. In this model, students work closely with faculty members to learn research methodology while serving as advocates for communities.

The JWU School of Engineering & Design has offered several Engineering classes which utilized community-based action research to meet both course outcomes and a defined community need. Examples include a water use feasibility study for the town of Glocester, RI and a research study of re-use options for a historic mill that was presented to the Western RI Civic Association.

Additional Examples of Community Based Action Research
We strongly suggest that faculty utilize the Jeffrey Howard’s “Service-Learning Course Design Workbook” (Howard 2001). This classic is a comprehensive tool for designing a service-learning course. We encourage all faculty considering teaching a service-learning course to read this workbook, and use it as a guiding tool throughout your course planning process. Even those who have been practicing service-learning for some time will find new insights and best practices to work into your course instruction without radically changing your course outline. Howard’s workbook includes some excellent worksheets to assist you in thinking through your course development/redevelopment.

- Because this comprehensive workbook is readily available online and best used in its original format, this tutorial will not give a complete overview of the content. However, we will look more in depth at Howard’s best practice principles:
Academic credit is for learning, not for service.
Do not compromise academic rigor.
Establish learning objectives.
Establish criteria for the selection of community service placements.
Provide educationally-sound learning strategies to harvest community learning and realize course learning objectives.
Prepare students for learning from the community.
Minimize the distinction between the students' community learning role and classroom learning role.
Re-think the faculty instructional role.
Be prepared for variation in, and some loss of control with, student learning outcomes.

Jeffrey Howard, Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning, University of Michigan.

Academic credit is for learning, not for service.

This first principle speaks to those who puzzle over how to assess students’ service in the community, or what weight to assign community involvement in final grades. In traditional courses, academic credit and grades are assigned based on students’ demonstration of academic learning as measured by the instructor. It is no different in service-learning courses. While in traditional courses we assess students’ learning from traditional course resources, e.g., textbooks, class discussions, library research, etc., in service-learning courses we evaluate students’ learning from traditional resources, from the community service, and from the blending of the two. So, academic credit is not awarded for doing service or for the quality of the service, but rather for the student’s demonstration of academic and civic learning.

Stated another way, we do not assign credit for completing the text book reading, we assign credit for demonstrating what the student learned through his/her time spent reading. The community service is also a learning tool, not a form of assessment.

Do not compromise academic rigor.

Since there is a widespread perception in academic circles that community service is a “soft” learning resource, there may be a temptation to compromise the academic rigor in a service-learning course. Labeling community service as a “soft” learning stimulus reflects a gross misperception. The perceived “soft” service component actually raises the learning challenge in a course. Service-learning students must not only master academic material as in traditional courses, but also learn how to learn from unstructured and ill-structured community experiences and merge that learning with the learning from other course resources. Furthermore, while in traditional courses students must satisfy only academic learning objectives, in service-learning courses students must satisfy both academic and civic learning objectives. All of this makes for challenging intellectual work, commensurate with rigorous academic standards.

Establish learning objectives.

It is a service-learning maxim that one cannot develop a quality service-learning course without first setting very explicit learning objectives. This principle is foundational to service-learning, and serves as the focus of sections four and five of this workbook. While establishing learning objectives for students is a standard to which all courses are accountable, in fact, it is especially necessary and advantageous to establish learning objectives in service-learning courses. The addition of the community as a learning context multiplies the learning possibilities. To sort out those of greatest priority, as well as to leverage the bounty of learning opportunities offered by community service experiences, deliberate planning of course academic and civic learning objectives is required.
Establish criteria for the selection of community service placements.

Giving students the choice of serving in *any* community-based organization as part of a service-learning course is tantamount to requiring students to read *any* book as part of a traditional course.

Faculty who are deliberate about establishing criteria for selecting community service placements will find that students are able to extract more relevant learning from their respective service experiences, and are more likely to meet course learning objectives.

We recommend four criteria for selecting service placements:

1. **Circumscribe the range of acceptable service placements around the content of the course** (e.g., for a course on homelessness, homeless shelters and soup kitchens are learning-appropriate placements, but serving in a hospice is not).

2. **Limit specific service activities and contexts to those with the potential to meet course-relevant academic and civic learning objectives** (e.g., filing papers in a warehouse, while of service to a school district, will offer little to stimulate either academic or civic learning in a course on elementary school education).

3. **Correlate the required duration of service with its role in the realization of academic and civic learning objectives** (e.g., one two-hour shift at a hospital will do little to contribute to academic or civic learning in a course on institutional healthcare).

4. **Assign community projects that meet real needs in the community as determined by the community.**

Provide educationally-sound learning strategies to harvest community learning and realize course learning objectives.

- Requiring service-learning students to merely record their service activities and hours as their journal assignment is tantamount to requiring students in an engineering course to log their activities and hours in a lab.
- Learning in any course is realized by an appropriate mix and level of learning strategies and assignments that correspond with the learning objectives for the course. Given that in service-learning courses we want to utilize students' service experiences in part to achieve academic and civic course learning objectives, learning strategies must be employed that support learning from service experiences and enable its use toward meeting course learning objectives.
- Learning interventions that promote critical reflection, analysis, and application of service experiences enable learning. To make certain that service does not underachieve in its role as an instrument of learning, careful thought must be given to learning activities that encourage the integration of experiential and academic learning.
- These activities include classroom discussions, presentations, and journals and paper assignments that support analysis of service experiences in the context of the course academic and civic learning objectives. Of course, clarity about course learning objectives is a prerequisite for identifying educationally-sound learning strategies.

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Prepare Students for Learning from the Community.

Most students lack experience with both extracting and making meaning from experience and in merging it with other academic and civic course learning strategies. Therefore, even an exemplary reflection journal assignment will yield, without sufficient support, uneven responses.

Faculty can provide:
(1) learning supports such as opportunities to acquire skills for gleaning the learning from the service context (e.g., participant-observer skills), and/or
(2) examples of how to successfully complete assignments (e.g., make past exemplary student papers and reflection journals available to current students to peruse).

Menlo (1993) identifies four competencies to accentuate student learning from the community: reflective listening, seeking feedback, acuity in observation, and mindfulness in thinking.

Minimize the Distinction Between the Students’ Community Learning Role and Classroom Learning Role.

Classrooms and communities are very different learning contexts. Each requires students to assume a different learner role. Generally, classrooms provide a high level of teacher direction, with students expected to assume mostly a passive learning role. In contrast, service communities usually provide a low level of teaching direction, with students expected to assume mostly an active learner role.

Alternating between the passive learning role in the classroom and the active learner role in the community may challenge and even impede student learning. The solution is to shape the learning environments so that students assume similar learning roles in both contexts.

While one solution is to intervene so that the service community provides a high level of teaching direction, we recommend, for several reasons, re-norming the traditional classroom toward one that values students as active learners. First, active learning is consistent with active civic participation that service-learning seeks to foster. Second, students bring information from the community to the classroom that can be utilized on behalf of others’ learning. Finally, we know from recent research in the field of cognitive science that students develop deeper understanding of course material if they have an opportunity to actively construct knowledge (Eyler & Giles, 1999).

Rethink the Faculty Instructional Role.

If faculty encourage students’ active learning in the classroom, what would be a concomitant and consistent change in one’s teaching role? Commensurate with the preceding principle’s recommendation for an active students learning posture, this principle advocates that service-learning teachers, too, rethink their roles. An instructor role that would be most compatible with an active student role shifts away from a singular reliance on transmission of knowledge and toward mixed pedagogical methods that include learning facilitation and guidance.

Exclusive or even primary use of traditional instructional models, e.g., a banking model (Freire, 1970), interferes with the promise of learning in service-learning courses. To re-shape one’s classroom role to capitalize on the learning bounty in service-learning, faculty will find Howard’s (1998) model of “Transforming the Classroom” helpful. This four-stage model begins with the traditional classroom in which students are passive, teachers are directive, and all conform to the learned rules of the classroom. In the second stage, the instructor begins to re-socialize herself toward a more facilitative role; but the students, socialized for many years to be passive learners, are slow to change to a more active mode. In the third stage, with the perseverance of the instructor, the students begin to develop and acquire the skills and propensities to be active in the classroom. Frequently, during this phase, faculty will become concerned that the learning is not as rich and rigorous as when they are using the more popular lecture format, and may regress to a more directive posture. Over time homeostasis is established, and the instructor and the students achieve an environment in which mixed pedagogical methods lead to students who are active learners, instructors fluent in multiple teaching methods, and strong academic and civic learning outcomes.

Be Prepared for Variation in, and Some Loss of Control with, Student Learning Outcomes.

For those faculty who value homogeneity in student learning outcomes, as well as control of the learning environment, service-learning may not be a good fit. In college courses, learning strategies largely determine student outcomes, and this is true in service-learning courses, too. However, in traditional courses, the learning strategies (i.e., lectures, labs, and readings) are constant for all enrolled students and under the watchful eye of the faculty member.

In service-learning courses, given variability in service experiences and their influential role in student learning, one can anticipate greater heterogeneity in student learning outcomes and compromises to faculty control. Even when service-learning students are exposed to the same presentations and the same readings, instructors can expect that classroom discussions will be less predictable and the content of student papers/projects less homogeneous than in courses without a service assignment.

As an instructor, are you prepared for greater heterogeneity in student learning outcomes and some degree of loss in control over student learning stimuli?

Maximize the Community Responsibility Orientation of the Course

This principle is for those who think that civic learning can only spring from the community service component of a course. One of the necessary conditions of a service-learning course is purposeful civic learning. Designing classroom norms and learning strategies that not only enhance academic learning but also encourage civic learning are essential to purposeful civic learning.

While most traditional courses are organized for private learning that advances the individual student, service-learning instructors should consider employing learning strategies that will complement and reinforce the civic lessons from the community experience. For example, efforts to convert from individual to group assignments, and from instructor-only to instructor and student review of student assignments, re-norms the teaching-learning process to be consistent with the civic orientation of service-learning.

There are many additional resources available to faculty members interested in increasing the quality and rigor of service-learning course experiences.

The Campus Compact Syllabi database is a great tool to examine case studies and syllabi examples from a variety of disciplines for ideas on how other faculty have incorporated service-learning. [http://www.compact.org/syllabi/](http://www.compact.org/syllabi/)

Additionally, the Alison Bryant text *Integrating Service-Learning into the University Classroom* is a good resource on incorporating service-learning into various disciplines using real life examples. This book is owned by the university and can be found in the Yena Center Library.
SERVICE-LEARNING LOGISTICS
As with any course activity in which students leave campus, service-learning can entail different risks than classroom learning. Faculty should consider the specific risks involved in academic service-learning, and respond appropriately in course and project design. While managing the risks associated with community-based learning can seem daunting, most risks can be minimized by following best practice guidelines. California State University has published an excellent risk management guide for their large service-learning program, much of which is very applicable to all higher education institutions. We have excerpted some of the guiding principles here, and encourage you to read the entire guidebook.
DO:

- Provide students with both on campus and on-site orientations to familiarize students with policies, procedures and risks involved in the specific service activities they will be providing and with the populations they serve.
- Include a description of the service as an expressed goal on the course syllabus.
- Include a description of the nature of the service placement and/or project.
- Specify the roles and responsibilities of students in the placement and/or service project.
- Include community-based organization contact information.
- Include whether or not the service project/experience is mandatory. If it is mandatory, offer an alternative for students who cannot do, for any reason, the specific type of service you have identified. DO include time requirements (how many hours total/per week/per term).
- Build a working relationship with your risk manager and contracts and procurement officer.
- Conduct site reviews before, during and after a service-learning course is offered.
- Meet the special safety needs of any student.
- Know when each student is scheduled to provide service and be able to verify that the student did provide the service at the community-based organization site. This will help to determine who holds liability for student behavior or student injury at any given time.
- Know where emergency contact information for students is kept, and what the procedures are at the university and at the community-based organization site if an emergency occurs.
**DO NOT:**

- Assume that students are aware of such issues as liability or sexual harassment policies. Both campus and site orientations are necessary to familiarize students with any potential risks involved with service-learning activities.
- Assume that students will automatically absorb incidental costs for fingerprinting and background checks, or that the community-based organization will pay these fees.
- Arrange travel for students unless through university provided transportation. Liability is greatly reduced if students are responsible for their own transportation to and from the service site.
For many projects, transportation planning is not necessary since students are generally responsible for their own transportation to and from service. In these cases, you should provide the students with an accurate address for the site, bus information and details such as parking and how to enter the building. This is one of the reasons why conducting the site visit is so essential. Only by visiting the organization yourself can you be confident in sending students there.

In project based service-learning, the majority of the work is done on campus, although visits to the organization are sometimes required and almost always enhance student learning and project outcomes. For some discipline based service-learning, there is sometimes a need to travel to a site such as for research or environmental service projects. We encourage faculty to plan ahead and request funding for university transportation through their department budget. It is necessary to request this funding prior to the year it is needed, so individual faculty should discuss this need with their department chair in the winter term for the upcoming year’s budget.
Once funding is secured, a van and/or bus can be requested through JWU Wildcat Wheels. Advance notice of at least two weeks is required, and it is recommended that you reserve your transportation needs as far in advance as possible to ensure that a driver and vehicle is available for your project. There is a request form that must be submitted, and can be obtained by contacting Wildcat Wheels. Another option is to become “van certified” through the university. This involves taking a computer tutorial and quiz as well as a driving test, provided through JWU Wildcat Wheels. Once you have become certified, you can drive students or other staff/faculty in a university 11 passenger van. This lowers the cost to just the rental of the van and the gas, instead of also having to pay for a driver. It also gives you greater scheduling options.

The Wildcat Wheels/Transportation Department can be reached at: 401-598-1156 or transrequest@jwu.edu.
There are a variety of material resources that will be useful or essential in your service-learning project. The type and amount of materials needed will vary widely depending on the type of project you are facilitating. The planning process with your community partner/client is an opportune time to plan for materials order and budget planning. Sometimes community partners are able to cover material costs or obtain donations. This is another area in which budget planning ahead of time is essential in order to secure funding for necessary resources.
We hope that this presentation has provided you with new insights into the development of a quality service-learning experience that will be of value to all stakeholders. However, there is so much more to learn about this transformative pedagogy!

For resources on evaluation, reflection, more discipline specific project examples, professional development and more, please visit the Community Based Experiential Education LibGuide.

You will find that many in the field are very happy to help other faculty improve their service-learning practice. It can be very helpful to connect with the JWU CBEE faculty network as well as faculty from other universities as you begin or continue this journey as a service-learning practitioner.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Faculty Toolkit for Service-Learning in Higher Education
- National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
- National Campus Compact
- Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning
- Clark University Faculty Handbook for Community Engagement
- Learning Through Reflection
- Northeastern University Service-Learning for Faculty
- University of Wisconsin-Madison Morgridge Center for Public Service
- Creighton University Office of Academic Excellence
- St. Louis Community College Faculty Resources
- Dispelling the Myths of Reflection