What is Academic Service-Learning?

FAU

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Academic Service-Learning (A S-L)

While participating in a course that is designated as an “academic service-learning” course you will experience the following:

- The assistance you provide to an agency/organization during your service-learning experience is service to a community which allows you to apply knowledge attained from specific coursework, to local, national, and/or global social issues.
- Throughout this course you will be participating in service-learning activities in addition to practicing civic engagement at campus, local, national, and/or global community levels.
- You will be asked to reflect on your service-learning experience, the impact on the community and your professional development.
- To receive academic service-learning notation of hours on your transcript, your hours must be recorded and submitted to your faculty/instructor.
- Academic service-learning students are also required to complete a post-assessment survey.
- Please visit the Weppner Center for LEAD & Service-Learning website, [www.fau.edu/leadandserve](http://www.fau.edu/leadandserve), for additional information or concerns.
- Once your hours have been reported to the Registrar’s office by your faculty/instructor and your survey has been completed, you will receive an academic service-learning notation on your transcript.
What is Civic Engagement and how does Academic Service-Learning fit into it?

Civic Engagement is individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern.

- It can take many forms, from individual volunteerism to organizational involvement.
- Civic engagement encompasses a range of specific activities such as working in a soup kitchen, serving on a neighborhood association, writing a letter to an elected official or voting.
- Academic Service-Learning, Volunteerism, and some service based Internships are all a part of Civic Engagement.
What is Academic Service-Learning?

**Academic Service-Learning (A S-L)** is learning achieved through service while applying curriculum taught in class.

- A S-L takes learning to the world beyond the classroom and enhances education by engaging students in service.
- A S-L allows structured time for thoughtful planning of service experience and guided reflection.
- Effective A S-L programs emphasize both learning and service.

**Class Instruction = The What?**
- Classes offer insight into *what* the issues are and *what* skills are needed to address the issues in community.

**A S-L Component = The How and Why?**
- Service allows you to learn *how* to address the issue impacting/affecting the Community and *why* are you learning the necessary skills in class.
Volunteering is engaging in activities where the primary emphasis is on the service being provided and the primary intended beneficiary is clearly the community agency where service is done (e.g., stuffing envelopes to be mailed out).

Internship programs engage students in service activities primarily for the purpose of providing students with hands-on experiences in a particular area of study. The primary intended beneficiary is clearly the student intern (e.g., pharmacy student interns at a for-profit branch of a pharmacy chain).

Academic Service-Learning is learning achieved through service while applying curriculum taught in class. There is equal emphasis on both learning and service and the student and the community reap the benefits (e.g., Students in an introductory sociology course tutor children and adolescents in local K-12 schools applying learning topics of race and class, socialization, social institutions, inequality, etc.)
Elements of Academic Service-Learning (A S-L)

1. **Investigation**
   Students begin to research community issues of interest/relevance that correlate with course objectives.

2. **Planning**
   Students, often working with professors and community partners, plan ways in which to address the community need.

3. **Action**
   Students and community partners implement plans by engaging in activities to meet community needs. This is the actual service portion of service-learning.

4. **Reflection**
   Students engage in activities to help process what they have learned about the community need, their actions, their impacts, what worked and did not work, and/or similar types of critical thinking.
Where to Serve?

Who are our Community Partners in Academic Service-Learning?

- Non-profit organizations, government agencies, elementary schools, secondary schools, institutions of higher education, hospitals, community service programs, faith-based organizations, and tribal nations, etc.

- Contact the Weppner Center for LEAD & Service-Learning for a list of suggestions for appropriate local community agencies.

- Tip: Organization’s website should end in .edu, .gov, .org to be classified as a non-profit.

Embrace the Opportunity to Grow

- This is a unique opportunity to develop a passion, foster a relationship with a potential employer, and/or test the waters about major decisions.

- This is not the time to be an ‘Envelope Licker’!

*Return to Elements of A S-L*
Reflection is Key to A S-L Projects

**Reflection** is the process of deriving meaning from experience

- It is conscious and intentional critical thinking about the service experience.
- Reflection is a huge part of what makes service SERVICE-LEARNING.

**FAU Reflection Requirements:**

- How the A S-L project links to your course objectives
- How the project impacted your personal and/or professional development
- How the community was impacted by your work

**Forms of reflection:**

- **Reading:** Case Studies, books about social issues, government documents, professional journals
- **Writing:** Journals, reflective essays, portfolios, grant proposals, letters to other students/clients of agency, published articles
- **Doing:** Conducting interviews, role playing, collecting photos
- **Telling:** Presentations, focus groups, informal discussions, formal class discussions
Benefits for Students

- Hours posted to official transcript
- Networking
- Explore career options
- Experience civic responsibility
- Solve problems with Community
- Résumé building
- Apply classroom knowledge and skills
- Awareness of social issues
- Broaden horizons
Benefits for the Community

- Additional expertise for community development
- Skilled volunteers
- Innovative ideas and approaches
- Strengthen advocacy efforts
- Build long-lasting relationships
- Enhance public awareness of community needs
- Participate in the student’s academic experience
- Potential employees
On-the-Job Conduct

- Dress appropriately/professionally for Community site.
- Arrive on-time and call when you cannot make it.
- Respect the diversity of the Community environment.
- Personal business during service hours using employer resources is inappropriate, (e.g. telephones, photocopy machines, fax machines, computers/email).
- Notify your instructor should any problems arise during service hours to help solve problem in a timely and professional manner (e.g. communication with supervisors or co-workers, inappropriate conduct).
Requirements for Academic Service-Learning Students

1. Review a presentation, “What is Academic Service-Learning?”, prior to beginning your academic service-learning project and completing hours in the community. The presentation can be found on the Weppner Center for LEAD & Service-Learning (WCLSL) website: www.fau.edu/leadandserve. Congratulations! You've just done this!

2. Once you have selected your location of service, complete an “Academic Service-Learning Risk Waiver” form. The waiver may be found on the WCLSL website, under Academic Service-Learning, for Students. Waivers are to be collected by your instructor.

3. Track Academic Service-Learning hours to submit to your faculty/instructor by deadline provided by faculty/instructor. Hours submitted by your faculty/instructor will be reported to the Registrar’s office for posting to your official transcript—a benefit for your future employment or professional/graduate school enrollment.

4. At the end of your Academic Service-Learning project, complete an electronic Academic Service-Learning Student Survey about your Academic Service-Learning experience. The link to the Survey will be available mid-semester on the WCLSL website: www.fau.edu/leadandserve and emailed to you as a registered student in an A S-L course.
Thank you for viewing this Academic Service-Learning tutorial!