WHY ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING?

Weppner Center for Lead and Service-Learning
Division of Student Affairs
Florida Atlantic University
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IN SEARCH OF OUR PURPOSE

- Research, see and act on problems individuals and communities face
- Engage directly in dialogue and problem solve with those most affected
- Observe firsthand effects of various social issues such as racism, sexism, poverty, and oppression
- Participate in engaged, challenging learning experiences
- Foster change
- Discover relevance of learning through real-world experiences and related reflection
MORE ON WHY A S-L…

- Personal growth and development
- Apply classroom knowledge and skills
  - Explore career options
- Networking
- Résumé building
- Hours posted to official transcript
- Experience civic responsibility
THE COMMUNITY'S WHY

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

“Discover relevance of learning through real-world experiences”

WHERE DOES THIS COME FROM?

ROOTS FROM the early 20th century where John Dewey introduced experience in education and described reflection as linking understanding with doing, whereby one cannot fully understand without doing.

EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION combines direct, hands-on experience with guided reflections and analysis of what is being done.
A S-L “How to” Guide

1. **Investigate**

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

2. **Plan**

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

3. **Act**

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

4. **Reflect**

   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.
INVESTIGATE 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’!
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MODEL THE WAY

- Dress appropriately/professionally for the 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).
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Reflection is the process of deriving meaning from experience

- Conscious and intentional critical thinking about the service experience
- Builds bridges between content learning, personal reflections, and first-hand experiences

**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
WHAT IS ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING?

ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING (A S-L) Is learning achieved through service while applying curriculum taught in class.

- Beyond classroom learning to learn and serve locally, nationally or globally
- Structured time for thoughtful planning of service experience and guided reflection.
- Emphasis on 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 you are learning the necessary skills in class.
Volunteering Main focus: *service being provided*; Primary intended beneficiary: *community* agency where service is done (e.g., stuffing envelopes to be mailed out).

Internship Main focus: purpose of providing students with hands-on learning experiences in a specific area of study; Primary intended beneficiary: student intern (e.g., pharmacy student interns at a for-profit branch of a pharmacy chain).

Academic Service-Learning Equal focus: both learning and service; Benefits both student and community (e.g., Students in an intro sociology course tutor children and adolescents in K-12 schools applying learning topics of race and class, socialization, social institutions, inequality, etc.).
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.
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, 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.
REQUIREMENTS FOR A S-L STUDENTS

1. Review “Why Academic Service-Learning?” presentation prior to beginning your academic service-learning project and completing hours in the community. 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 faculty 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/leadandserv.
TO WRITE **MY STORY**, I NEED A BIT OF **YOURS**.

THOUGHT: SERGE RAVET
EPIC 2015
BARCELONA

OUR STORY IS A **SOCIAL FABRIC**...
THANK YOU!

LEAD AND SERVE TEAM