

**Indiana State University
Center for Public Service and Community Engagement**

Service Learning Manual



Service Learning at Indiana State University

Experiential learning has been identified by the ISU community as an appropriate technique for improving student learning and engagement, as well as contributing to the economic and social well-being of the state of Indiana. Service learning is community-based form of experiential learning that has been widely embraced by K-12 and higher education faculty, including many members of the Indiana State University community. This manual has been developed by the Center for Public Service and Community Engagement to provide a resource for faculty who are interested in incorporating service-learning into their coursework. Additional information and assistance is available from the Center. Please contact us at 237-7900 or <http://web.indstate.edu/publicservice/>.

What is service-learning?

Service-learning is still evolving as a distinct area of scholarship and, as a result, there is not a common set of terminology used by educators. The core principles of a service-learning experience are that service-learning should:

- Engage students in meeting the unmet needs of communities. Effective service-learning is built on a partnership between the University and a community organization. Faculty and students work in conjunction with this University partner to identify the issue that will be addressed by service-learning students.
- Enhance students' academic learning; their sense of social responsibility, and their civic skills.

The following definitions are cited frequently in service-learning literature:

Service-learning is a process through which students are involved in community work that contributes significantly:

- To positive change in individuals, organizations, neighborhoods, and/or larger systems in a community; and
- To students' academic understanding, civic development, personal or career growth, and/or understanding of larger social issues.

This process always includes an intentional and structured educational/developmental component for students, and may be employed in curricular or co-curricular settings.

Minnesota Campus Compact

Service-learning is a credit-bearing, educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding or

course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.

*Robert Bringle and Julie Hatcher
Michigan Journal of Community-Service Learning, 1995*

What is the difference between service-learning and volunteerism?

When we encourage college students to do volunteer work because the need are less fortunate and therefore deserve our handouts, a clear message of inferiority and superiority is sent, and the lessons learned only serve to reinforce the dichotomy that already exists between the “haves” and the “have-nots.”

Lisman, 1998

The U.S. has a long tradition of volunteerism. Each year Americans provide over 20 billion of hours of service to their communities. Although University students also have a tradition of volunteer service that should be nurtured and encouraged, it is important to recognize the significant differences between service-learning and volunteerism:

- Service-learning is almost always tied to a credit bearing course.
- Service-learning is explicitly tied to the learning objectives and academic content of a course.
- Service-learning meets community needs AND faculty and student learning needs.
- Although service-learning foster civic responsibility, that is not the primary outcome of the experience.
- Service-learning always includes critical reflection.

Service-learning is very intentional in its design. The primary outcome of service-learning always is learning that occurs through community-based service.

Six Models for Service Learning

Service-learning courses can take many formats. The following categories are representative of most service-learning courses (Heffernan, 2001):

“Pure” Service-Learning - The core idea in this type of course is community service. “Pure” service-learning courses typically are not lodged in a single discipline. Students enroll in these courses because they are interested in volunteerism, student activism, and civic engagement. The academic purpose of this type of course is to prepare students for active and informed civic participation. An Alternative Spring Break course is an example of “pure” service-learning. Students travel to another geographic region and

provide focused service to a philanthropic or environmental agency during an intensive, one-week program.

RCSM 485

Community Development and Nonprofit Organizations

Course Description: This course explores how nonprofit organizations work to address social, economic, and environmental challenges in local communities in various regions of the United States. This is a service-learning course which provides students an opportunity to study a social, economic, or environmental issue in-depth and then provide a week of direct service in conjunction with a nonprofit organization to address the issue. Students are required to participate in the Alternative Spring Break program in conjunction with enrollment in the course. Travel arrangements for the service project will be made by the University.

Course Purpose: This course provides an opportunity for students to earn academic credit through a combination of course-based study of community development and nonprofit organizations and participation in an intensive service-learning experience during spring-break week (Alternative Spring Break). The theme of the course will vary year to year.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course students:

1. will apply theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom in a community setting through direct service to a nonprofit organization.
2. develop an understanding of the role of nonprofit organizations in addressing local environmental, social, or economic issues.
3. develop a personal philosophy of community service and involvement.

Discipline-Based Service-Learning - Students provide service throughout the semester and reflect on experiences using course content as a basis of analysis. Discipline-based service-learning courses are found in professional programs, liberal arts courses, and basic studies.

Discipline-Based Service Learning School of Nursing

Amber Azar and Abby Mehringer worked with their preceptor Michele Pantle to provide service to the Home Health Division of the Indiana University School of Nursing Sycamore Nursing Center during their

senior nursing leadership and management course. They identified that elderly clients often do not know the dosage or medications they are taking. Mothers are often not aware of what immunizations their children have had when. They wrote a grant and got funding from the Indiana State University Foundation to print 500 booklets, 250 for senior citizens for recording their medication records and blood sugar readings and 250 for children for recording their immunizations and providing growth and development information. They also had clip magnets made with the Sycamore Nursing Center phone number on them so clients could clip their booklets to it so they would not be easily lost. They were serving 160 clients at the time. Others are constantly being referred to the Sycamore Nursing Center. Those clients now take those booklets to their clinic appointments, and that helps give more accurate care. The students also assisted beginning nursing students with making phone contacts with lonely elderly clients and supervised senior students with making home visits to provide health care. They each donated 90 hours to these services, valued at \$3,600 at \$20 per hour.

Bob Davis was precepted by Tawnia Hemann, staff educator, for his experiences with Hospice and the Visiting Nurses Association. He helped a committee plan a bereavement camp for children and teens that have experienced a loss. Dawn Dunagan worked with Karen Herrera at Covered Bridge to put together a resource manual on traumatic brain injuries and a reference manual describing children and the grieving process in collaboration with Hospice of the Wabash Valley grieving camp.

Heidi Woodard worked with her preceptor, Connie Steigmeyer, and others through the Vigo County Health Department to do a community preassessment to identify community needs and plan programs to meet those identified needs. Reasons for doing a community assessment includes but is not limited to: 1. Provide a comprehensive picture of the community by compiling and interpreting information from a wide variety of sources. 2. Identify needs and issues and establish clear definitions of the problems. 3. Identify the formal and informal resources available in the community. 4. Assist in establishing priorities and developing action plans. 5. Address a particular problem in the community. 6. Develop collaborative delivery systems. 6. Build upon a network of contacts by developing purposeful working relationships. 7. Mobilize the community of contacts to take ownership for what happens in the community. Professor Tomey helped obtain grant funding to assist with the project.

Tonya Barnett volunteered for a medical mission trip to Haiti November 4-11, 2002. Before the trip she contacted local physicians

and collected 160 pounds of sample medications, which she inventoried and packed for transportation. While in Haiti, she worked with her preceptor Dr. Julie Fine 10 hours a day for four days seeing about 100 patients a day. She took vital signs, did finger stick blood sugar tests, urine dipsticks, and dispensed medications and glasses. She assisted in treatment of a variety of infections, anemia, malnutrition, scabies, and intestinal worms. The 50 hours she donated were worth \$1000 at \$20 per hour.

Problem-Based Service Learning - Students serve as “consultants” for a community client. This model is based on the presumption that students have an established base of knowledge and expertise. Individuals or teams of students work with a community organization to identify a specific need and then develop a solution for the need in the form of a final product to deliver to the community partner.

BUS 401 Senior Business Experience

The senior business experience is a capstone course in both business and in general education. While focusing on the theory and practice of strategic management, students integrate the foundation and functional areas of business and synthesize their business education with their liberal studies experience. Business topics include managing the firm for competitive advantage, the learning organization, and quality and innovation management. Strategic management and liberal studies are used as tools for the development and assessment of personal and professional goals.

To accomplish the learning objectives of the course, a student run organization named Sycamore Business Advisors (SBA) was created. The mission statement of SBA states that, “Sycamore Business Advisors exists to provide quality strategic process consulting services for small to midsize businesses and not-for-profit organizations. We act as a catalyst by guiding business/organizational leaders through the strategic management process.” Thus, SBA has two main aims. The first is student learning focusing upon the pillars of general education and strategic management. This learning is carried out using intensive experiential education pedagogy emphasizing knowledge, action and reflection. The second is service to the community. This is done through partnerships with organizations that need the services of the company.

Students run the business. They fill all executive and consulting positions and the instructor acts as a facilitator of the learning and service experience. The success or failure of the team based

projects rest upon the students. During the process, students interact with the community partner and ultimately deliver a written and oral strategic analysis report.

In addition to SBA, students participate in a 6-8 hour workshop on professional and personal development. This workshop is designed to help the students reflect upon their undergraduate experience and to make informed decisions for their future development. Each student writes a professional/personal development plan as an outcome of the workshop.

Capstone Courses – Service-learning capstone courses typically are discipline based. The goal of the capstone course is to synthesize students' understanding of their discipline. Capstone courses are useful in helping students transition from theory to practice.

WS 450 Student Activism in Theory and Practice (WS 450)

Student Activism in Theory and Practice is a General Education Capstone (GEC) course that is open to all majors. To enroll in the course, you must have completed seventy-eight credit hours and at least seven of your general education requirements. In this course, we will explore the artistic, social, political, legal, and philosophical foundations of student activism. Students will also organize the Take Back the Night march and rally.

One of the central purposes of a GEC course is to help students to synthesize their liberal studies experiences by making connections within their liberal studies courses, between liberal studies courses and their majors, and related to their future role as professional, consumer, provider, and citizen. Therefore, as we learn about activism and rely upon skills and knowledge obtained through our liberal studies/major courses to plan and organize the Take Back the Night march, we will frequently reflect on the ways in which the same skills and knowledge can be utilized to help us meet our professional goals and to become more efficacious consumers, providers, and citizens.

Service Internships – This type of course is discipline based and more intensive than other service-learning courses. Students typically work between 10 and 40 hours in the community setting. Service internships differ from traditional internships in the reflection component. Students are required to link their service experiences with discipline-based theory throughout the internship.

RCSM 473 American Humanics Internship

The capstone experience of the American Humanics program is the internship. Each student is required to complete an internship of at least 300 hours. The AH internship bridges the student's academic program with a professional setting by requiring the student to find a suitable organization, interview for a position, set personal objectives, complete job responsibilities, and undergo a performance evaluation. Students can complete internships with local affiliates of our nonprofit partners and other nonprofit organizations. Internships can be completed during the fall, spring, or summer terms during the student's junior or senior year.

Goals of the AH internship include:

- Learning more about a chosen industry or field.
- Applying classroom theory to real-life situations.
- Becoming more knowledgeable about general work functions such as marketing, human resources, communications, operations, financial and resource development, research and development, and program design.
- Learning career-related skills such as public speaking, supervision, analyzing data, budgeting, and coordinating events.
- Developing valuable contacts in the field by networking with professionals.
- Helping the student analyze a personal commitment to the field of nonprofit management and leadership.
- Increasing communication between the academic and professional communities so that they both benefit from the exchange.

Specific assignments of the internship include:

- Examination and a reflective assessment of the organization's mission statement, strategic planning documents, organization chart, and staff structure.
- Planning and implementation of a special project that could include web development, special event planning, policy analysis and development, or marketing.
- A reflective journal to specifically address the relationship between practice and theory.

Undergraduate Community-Based Action Research – This type of service-learning is appropriate for students with substantial experience in community service and adequate knowledge of research methodology. Community-based action research requires students to work closely with faculty members

and a community partner to design a research project that addresses a specific community need.

RCSM 473 Community Action Research Project

During the past several years, I have required students in the Aging and Leisure class to complete 5 volunteer hours at a long-term care facility, senior center, adult day program, or other facility that serves older adults. I generally have found that students feel like they learn a great deal about aging through the assignment, but I am concerned that these experiences often support the development of negative, stereotypical views of aging. Specifically, I have had the following concerns:

- Students learned to view activity programs as diversionary activities with little connection to other aspects of life at the facility.
- Students learned to evaluate residents based, almost entirely, on the individual resident's willingness and desire to participate in scheduled activities. Residents who declined to participate in activities were described as being grouchy or withdrawn and having behavior problems or negative attitudes.
- Little consideration was given to the individual leisure preferences of residents. Students learned to view client populations as a homogeneous group. Scheduled activities were viewed as "good for the residents," regardless of whether or not individual residents actually enjoyed participating in the activity.
- Infantilizing behavior toward older adults was supported by the tendency of most of the facilities in Terre Haute to offer childlike programs to the residents on a regular basis.

Furthermore, students were modeling staff behavior and learning to address residents as "sweetie," "honey," or other monikers that are not age appropriate. In short, the volunteer assignment was not providing a sufficient opportunity for students to engage in critical reflection of the role of activity in later life and daily life in the long-term care facility or other institution. As a result, I have developed a new assignment that combines pieces of previous assignments.

You will complete this assignment in groups of 4-6. Each student is required to spend 5 hours volunteering in the activity program of the facility, complete a thorough in-depth interview of a resident, and spend additional time observing some aspect of life in the facility. Specifically, I would like for each group member to take responsibility for evaluating one of the following types of interactions or behaviors:

informal interactions between residents/clients, resident/client and staff interactions, resident/client and staff behavior during scheduled activities, informal leisure behavior, and the rhythm of daily life in the facility. The final report will include the following: a summary of each in-depth interview, a summary of individual evaluations of interactions and behaviors, and a written evaluation of the facility that summarizes areas of concern and develops recommendations for practice.

Academic Principles of Experiential Learning Courses

Experiential learning, at its core, is pedagogy based upon optimally engaging students in the educational process through sequential exposure to challenging and enriching activities conducted in appropriate settings. It integrates development of knowledge, skills, and dispositions, and fosters methods of critical inquiry and personal reflection. Experiential learning includes a variety of pedagogies not limited to service-learning, field and community-based research, co-ops, and internships. The following principles were written to assist faculty and curriculum committees with the development of experiential learning courses.

Course Objectives: *Course objectives must be clear and appropriately rigorous for university curricula.* Although the intrinsic value of non-traditional pedagogical approaches for student engagement is obvious and well documented, a course proposal based firmly upon a teaching method must still establish clear, testable content/learning objectives. Establishment of these objectives is of even larger significance than in traditional courses because of the increased complexity of courses that employ experiential learning activities. The architecture of the class—the experiences, learning strategies and evaluation-- must therefore descend directly from the stated objectives. In addition, in community-based field experiences, a clear connection should be drawn between the stated learning outcomes and the mission and scope of activities of the partner organization(s) where service will occur.

Example: A field experience in mountain geography might outline as objectives that students: a) become familiar with the structure and processes related to alpine landforms and b) demonstrate a working understanding of, and execute, a scientific approach to problem-solving as they conduct research. Although the pedagogy of a field class differs from a lecture class, the course objectives do not differ greatly.

Learning Strategies: *Learning strategies must be demonstrably effective and directly pointed toward course objectives.* While many types of experience “teach” the participant something, not all learning experiences rise to the level and academic rigor of a university class. Proposed

experiential learning courses, to the extent to which they depart from traditional and demonstrated forms of content and delivery, must offer a compelling argument for the effectiveness of the pedagogical approach to be used. In particular, a clear path from pedagogy to objectives must be outlined within the course syllabus and in the evaluation measures chosen.

Community-based experiences require additional consideration in development of the learning experience. Development of a partnership with a community organization should begin well in advance of the start of the course. Organization staff should receive information about the learning outcomes of the course and the expectations related to students' service. A quality community placement will allow students to exercise initiative, take responsibility, and work as peers with practitioners and/or clients. Community voice is an important consideration in community-based experiences. Placement should reflect real concerns of individuals and community organizations. Students should have the opportunity to study community assessments or other data that provide a foundation for understanding the identified community need.

Example: Political science students are immersed in community issues and politics through conversations or internships with local representatives and stakeholders. It could be argued, in defense of the pedagogical approach, that witnessing and exploring an actual case study of local politics provides a direct insight to political systems that is difficult to obtain theoretically.

Reflection: *Structured reflection is a necessary element of most successful learning experiences.* In most forms of experiential coursework, students will need the opportunity to reflect on the progression of their learning in a manner that is both self-critical and exploratory. When it is required as an element of learning within the syllabus, reflection should be systematic, with regularly scheduled periods for self-examination and discussion, and involve a written component. Reflection should be integrated throughout the class experience by linking it with other reading, writing and discussion assignments.

Example: Elementary education students maintain a detailed log of their initial classroom experiences. Through careful review, they are able to adjust their teaching performance and examine their changing attitudes and approaches over time. The supervising faculty member can evaluate these logs to search for increased sophistication of understanding and to comment on the student's ability to articulate in writing.

Evaluation: *Critical evaluation of student performance by the faculty member is an indispensable component of any university class.* The forms of evaluation of student performance in an experiential learning class may be as variable as the experiences themselves, but must include written

demonstration of knowledge acquired, as outlined in the content objectives and shaped by learning strategies. *Importantly, students must demonstrate both acquisition of course content and an improved ability to integrate theory and practice.* The quality of writing and insight evident in the reflection documents might comprise a portion of the evaluation process, but not entirely supplant more objective or quantitative approaches. A variety of forms of evaluation of student performance may test knowledge acquisition and student ability to analyze, synthesize, make judgments, and apply theory and concepts to practical problems or in new situations, such as journal reflections, theses and written reports, written exams and oral presentations.

Where appropriate (i.e., community-based learning), community partners should be included in evaluation. Minimal community input might consist of sharing the evaluation plan with the partner and providing a mechanism for receiving feedback about student performance. Community partners might also be invited to read reports, attend student presentations or otherwise evaluate final projects.

Example: Chemistry students, given a series of local pollutant issues to explore, submit a series of collaborative reports as quasi-analysts/consultants. The faculty member and community agents evaluate these reports on a number of levels—writing quality, basic chemistry, appropriateness of analytical methods chosen, accuracy and utility of findings and recommendations.

DEVELOPING SERVICE-LEARNING COURSES

The first step in designing a service-learning course is to carefully consider how the learning objectives of your course might be learned through a community-based experience. Service-learning experiences can emphasize discipline related content, professional or life skills, and civic attitudes and responsibilities. The following questions were written to help faculty determine the focus of their service-learning projects.

Service-Learning Course Design Worksheet

1. Describe the discipline related content you will focus on during the service-learning experience.

Placement Considerations for Service-Learning

The quality of service-learning placements can be determined by the extent to which the placement meets agency service and student learning needs. Campus Compact had identified the following considerations for service-learning placements:

1. Placement Quality – Can students:
 - a. exercise initiative?
 - b. take responsibility?
 - c. work as peers with practitioners and community members?
2. Application – Are students linking what they learn in the classroom to what they are doing in the community? Are agency staff aware of the social justice issues that students are learning about in class? Are students developing strategies for working towards social justice?
3. Diversity – Are students working with diverse clients, students, and practitioners? Are there opportunities to reflect on interactions with diverse groups?
4. Community Voice – Do the students believe the placement reflects a real community concern? Is there community assessment data that students can study? Can students participate in assessment of community needs?
5. Reflection – Are there adequate opportunities for reflection? Are students asked to juxtapose their initial expectations about the experience against the realities of the service experience? Are students asked to critically assess their contributions, identifying both strengths and weaknesses.

Considerations for Working with Community Partners

The success of your service-learning project is dependent on the relationship you develop with a community partner. Effective service-learning projects require planning and communication between you and the community partner prior, during, and after the service-learning experience. Following are some suggestions for developing a successful relationship with your community partner.

1. Make contact with a community partner well in advance of the start of the course. At your initial meeting be prepared to share your learning outcomes for the service-learning project. You also may need to explain the difference between service-learning and volunteerism. A community agency may be use to working with volunteers that can be assigned tasks (i.e. stuffing envelopes) on an as-needed basis.
2. Discuss your community partner's mission, scope of activities, and needs for service during the initial meeting. If your desired learning outcomes

are not consistent with the mission and scope of activities of the local agency, you will need to consider another partner.

3. What does the community partner hope to gain from the experience? Typically, community partners are seeking:
 - a. A new source of volunteers.
 - b. Prospective interns.
 - c. Technical expertise from faculty and/or students.
4. Provide a realistic overview of the skills and abilities of your students. Your community partner will need to know about the level of supervision required of your students. If you are providing technical assistance to an agency, do your students have advanced skills required to develop a professional product or program that can be implemented? Can you rely on your students to consistently report to the agency for their service? Will students work as individuals or in groups?
5. Develop a plan for supervision of students. You will need an on-site supervisor who relays concerns about individual students and/or the quality of the service directly to you. The on-site supervisor also should be involved in the assessment of the experience. If you are placing a large number of inexperienced students in an agency and you have adequate resources, you might consider utilizing a graduate assistant to manage logging student hours and troubleshooting on-site.
6. Share your evaluation plan with the community partner. What standards of performance will you use? It is important to communicate that students will not be evaluated solely on “showing up.”
7. Arrange for a representative of the community partner agency to meet with the students prior to the service experience. It may be useful for community partners to first meet with the students in the classroom and again in the agency for an orientation. It is important for the community partner to share with the students the mission and scope of activities of the agency, procedural guidelines and rules of conduct for the agency, and an overview of how the students’ service will meet a real need of the agency.
8. If the agency has a volunteer manual, it should be made available to the students. Pre-service screenings required of volunteers, including criminal background checks and TB screenings, should and, probably will, be required of service-learning students. Ask about any specific screening requirements prior to the start of your course. Share those requirements with your students during the first few days of class. Be prepared to make alternative arrangements if a student does not meet screening requirements. (For example, some youth-serving agencies will not allow convicted felons to work directly with children.) If screening requirements are strenuous (i.e. Volunteers need to profess a certain faith.), consider developing another community partnership or multiple community partnerships.
9. Plan a timeframe and location for the work.

10. Utilize a service-learning contract for students, faculty, and community partners. Examples will be available from the Center for Public Service and Community Engagement during the fall semester of 2003.
11. Develop and communicate an emergency reporting system. Students should contact the agency and their professor if they are unable to meet a service commitment. Incidents at the agency (injuries, unprofessional behavior, etc.) should be reported to the agency staff and the faculty member.
12. Communicate with the community partner on an on-going basis over the semester.
13. Invite the community partner to participate in the evaluation of final projects, presentations, portfolios, web pages, etc.
14. Provide recognition for the efforts of the community partner. The Office of Public Relations at ISU should be notified of your project. Community-based organizations, like the University, value positive exposure in the local media. Write a letter of thanks and cc it to the partner's supervisor. Organize a celebration on the last day of class. Encourage students to write individual letters of appreciation. Include the community partner in University-wide recognition of service-learning partners.

If you need assistance in initiating a community-campus partnership, please contact the Center for Public Service and Community Engagement at 237-7900.

Getting Started: Current Needs of Local Agencies

The Center for Public Service and Community Engagement has facilitated a number of focus groups and one on one meetings with local nonprofit organizations. During these meetings a number of potential service projects have been suggested. Following is a list of some of those suggestions:

- Expand the Reading Corps program that is currently offered in the library to schools or community centers.
- Work with the Terre Haute Housing Authority and Cooperative Extension to offer economic literacy programs.
- Coordinate neighborhood revitalization efforts including home repair, home painting, and alley cleanup.
- Assist the Redevelopment Corporation with title work.
- Provide assistance to older adults with basic home maintenance and winterization.
- Conduct energy audits and develop energy saving plans in low income neighborhoods.
- Design and build ramps for wheelchair access.
- Conduct an oral history project in older neighborhoods.

- Complete a research project to determine how residents informally identify neighborhoods in the community.
- Promote food security through work with local food banks and nutrition programs in the community.
- Provide technical assistance for grant writing, web design and data management.
- Design and build bookshelves and learning centers for local childcare providers.
- Read to pre-school children.
- Develop an accounting system for a small, nonprofit agency.
- Coordinate a fundraising program for a small, nonprofit agency.
- Establish a community garden program in conjunction with Ryves Hall, 14th and Chestnut Community Center, Hyte Center, or another local agency.
- Develop a science curriculum for local pre-school and childcare facilities.
- Monitor levels of air and water pollutants – provide results to local government and other interested organizations.
- Assist local nonprofits and community groups with newsletter development.
- Develop and implement a plan to improve the interior design of a local long-term care facility, senior center, community center, or other related facility.
- Create an exhibit of local art, folk art, crafts, quilts, photography, etc. in a museum or other public area. You could feature the work of older adults, children, senior center participants, etc.
- Work through a local community group to create an exhibit that highlights the contributions of a minority or marginalized group to the history of Terre Haute. Hold the exhibit in a local business, community center, or school.
- Work with local musicians or University music students to offer music lessons to children from low-income homes.
- Develop a theater program in one of the community centers.
- Design a playground for the 14th and Chestnut Community Center.
- Design and/or build bike racks for local community centers.
- Research grant opportunities for local nonprofit agencies.
- Develop an on-line summary of census data for Vigo County and Terre Haute. The summary could be made available in printed form or on-line for agencies and residents.
- Write Public Service Announcements for nonprofit organizations.
- Develop marketing plans and timelines for nonprofit organizations.
- Create a “how-to” manual for publicizing events in the local community.
- Provide consultation and technical expertise on compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Service-Learning Syllabi

The inclusion of a service-learning project places new demands on students that should be clearly define in the course syllabus. Heffernan (2001) identified the following components of exemplary service-learning syllabi:

- Identify service as an expressed goal.
- Clearly describe how the service experience will be measured and what will be measured.
- Describe the nature of the service placement and/or project.
- Specify the roles and responsibilities of students in the placement and/or service projects, (e.g., transportation, time requirements, community contacts, etc.)
- Define the need(s) the service placement meets.
- Specify how students will be expected to demonstrate what they have learning in the placement project (journal, papers, presentations).
- Present courses assignments that link the service placement and the course content.
- Include a description of the reflective process.
- Include a description of the expectations for the public dissemination of students' work.

Remember that your course syllabus serves as a contract with your students. Consequently, delineating the specific requirements of your service-learning project will help ensure that students are clear about your expectations.

Reflection

Experience alone is insufficient to be called experiential education, and it is the reflection process which turns experience into experiential education

Joplin, 1995

In service-learning courses, regular time periods should be scheduled for discussion and other reflective activities. Student reflection is the primary vehicle for determining the extent to which students are able to integrate theory and practice. Eyler and Giles (1999) suggest that faculty consider including the following reflection elements in service-learning courses:

- Opportunities to reflect on expectations before the service begins.
- Frequent opportunities for discussion of service.
- Frequent classroom application of theory to service experience and vice versa.
- Written assignments with increasing demands for analysis as service progresses.
- Frequent feedback on journals, work, projects, and other work.
- Critical reflection that challenges student assumptions.

Reflective activities take many forms and may include journal, essay, and other reflective writing, group discussions, visual and oral presentations, self-

evaluations, narratives, case studies, videos, photographic essays, and web pages. Campus Compact has created an extensive website dedicated to reflection and service-learning. The site is available at:

<http://www.compact.org/disciplines/reflection/index.html>.

Community-Based Learning and Risk Management

Community-based learning is an important part of a student's education that requires careful and thoughtful planning and preparation. An important part of this preparation is risk management. Although community-based learning may involve some risk, following risk management procedures can ensure that students have a safe and quality experience.

Key steps to minimizing risk include:

1. Provide adequate information about the student's duties. Utilization of a learning commitment that is signed by the community partner, student, and faculty will help assure that all participants have similar expectations.
2. Develop placements that appropriately match student abilities and community partner expectations.
3. Define a communication process between the student, partner, and faculty.
4. Provide training for students prior to placement.
5. Utilize an informed consent statement to assure that students are aware of any risks they may encounter. A sample informed consent is available from the Center for Public Service and Community Engagement.
6. Inform students that Indiana State University's insurance does not cover students traveling to or from community sites or while providing service in the community.
7. Students who are providing direct service to child and youth-serving agencies should undergo a limited criminal background screening through the Office of Public Safety. A consent form for the screening is available through the Center for Public Service and Community Engagement.

Seidman and Tremper (1994) offer the following basic principles of risk management in service-learning:

1. Everyone knows what is expected of him or her. All have a position description, operate within those bounds, and are confident that they will be treated with dignity and respect.
2. Everyone knows how to and is able to perform her or his duties properly and safely. They have been trained and equipped

appropriately so that they have the knowledge, skills, and tools to do their jobs.

3. Everyone knows when and how to report problems or suggest changes. They are expected to recognize potential hazards and are encouraged to propose solutions.

Indiana State University Service Learning Commitment

Date Due to Course Instructor: _____

Total Hours Required: _____

Student Name: _____

Phone: _____

Course Name and
Number: _____

Course
Instructor: _____ Phone: _____

Community
Agency: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Date and Time of Orientation
Visit/Meeting: _____

Supervisor Initials: _____

Related Course Learning Objectives – (Determined by Instructor)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Service Learning Project Description

Days and Times Student Will Be On Site

Student’s Personal Learning Objectives

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

AGREEMENT

I agree to honor the minimum commitment required for the service-learning option in my class, as well as any of the additional training and/or time requirements of my service-learning site as detailed by the course syllabus and the community agency representative. I also agree to contact the instructor and the site supervisor should I have any concerns about my service-learning responsibilities.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

I agree to provide adequate training and supervision for the service-learning student, to outline responsibilities for the student that meet the stated learning objectives for the student’s course, and to complete necessary service-learning forms by the due dates. I also agree to contact the instructor should I have any concerns about a student’s performance or service-learning responsibilities.

Community Agency Supervisor

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

I have reviewed this contract and found the course objectives and the service responsibilities to be appropriately matched.

Faculty

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Center for Public Service and Community Engagement
Indiana State University
Terre Haute, IN 47809
812-237-7900

**Indiana State University
Service Learning Informed Consent Form**

I _____, intend to participate in community service at _____, for the course _____.

I understand that my responsibilities at the community organization are:

_____.

I understand that certain risks are inherent in such activity and I fully accept these risks. These risks may include but are not limited to

_____.

and those normally associated with travel to and from community sites, including catastrophic injury or death.

I understand that I am required to provide my own health and accident insurance. Neither the Trustees of Indiana State University nor my instructor is responsible for any medical or legal expenses that may result from injury or illness sustained while participating in community service.

Participant Signature _____

Date _____

Participant Name (print) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Person to contact in case of emergency

Name _____ Relationship _____

Phone _____

Address _____

**SERVICE LEARNING VERIFICATION FORM
INDIANA STATE UNIVERSITY**

Student Name: _____

Phone: _____

Course Name and
Number: _____

Course
Instructor: _____ Phone: _____

Community
Agency: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Please complete the following information for your service-learning course:

Date of Project
Completion: _____

Type of Service Performed:

Number of Hours Completed: _____

I certify that I have completed all hours recorded on this form:

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Agency Signature: _____

References

Bringle, R.G., & Hatcher, J.A. (1995). A service-learning curriculum for faculty. *Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning*. 112-122.

Heffernan, K. (2001). *Fundamentals of Service-Learning Course Construction*. Campus Compact: Providence, RI.

Lisman, C.D. (1998). *Toward a Civic Society*. Bergin & Harvey: Westport, CT.

Seidman, A., & Tremper, C. (1994). *Legal issues for service-learning programs*. Nonprofit Risk Management Center.