Service-Learning is an experiential teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich students’ learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

Integrating Service-Learning combines the goals of your course with the needs of the community and gives you and your students an opportunity for experiential learning. Service-learning partnerships encourage active learning and future civic engagement.

The Service-Learning Difference:

- Picking up trash as part of a clean-up event is Service.
- Studying water samples under a microscope is Learning.
- Collecting and analyzing water samples, documenting results, and presenting findings to a local pollution control agency, all while successfully fulfilling course learning outcomes specifically tied to the activity is Service-Learning.

Service-Learning has been adopted by college faculty nationwide. Service-learning is intentionally linked with an academic course and incorporates specific pedagogical goals for civic engagement. Service-learning includes structured reflection activities to process what was learned from the service experience. With social justice at its philosophical root, service-learning pedagogy naturally combines the life of the mind with habits of the heart.
Service-Learning Best Practices:

- The course with a service-learning component should be rigorous and challenging
- Academic credit is for learning, not for service
- Academic rigor is not compromised through the addition of service-learning activities
- The service is linked to one or more learning outcomes on the syllabus
- The service experience should enhance student learning
- The selection of service placements is based on established criteria and understanding between community partners, PSCC and the faculty member, not individual students and the community partner
- The reflection about the service-learning component of the course is pedagogically sound (see sample reflection activities)
- Students receive faculty guidance in how to learn from their service experience
- Course material links to the student’s service role in the community
- Faculty using service-learning are flexible and responsive to their students and their community

Liability & Risk:

All students participating in Service-Learning at PSCC are required to complete a “Hold Harmless” form prior to performing their service. Liability forms, specific to the community partner, are also usually necessary. Completing these prior to service protects the instructor and the college. Each instructor can consult with the college’s service-learning facilitators, Annie Gray to discuss college protocol for assigning and implementing service-learning assignments.

How to Set Up Your Course:

1. **Start with the syllabus.** In order for Service-Learning to be well integrated into a course, a teacher should stress relevancy of the service to course material. The goal is to link service to one or more learning outcomes for the course. Course outcomes and service should reinforce each other and produce a greater impact than either could alone. One helpful way to think about skills learned in class is how they may work toward problem-solving at the community partner site. The syllabus should assist students’ transition from campus classroom to community classroom.

2. **Make an appointment** with Annie before the semester begins for some help setting up your course. They can help with specific community placements, reflection ideas and assessment tips.

3. **Check in** with Annie to discuss how your course is going as the semester of service unfolds.

4. **Reflect** when the semester is over- what went well, what did not- let Annie know so you can brainstorm for next time.

Questions to Ask When Planning a Course With a Service-Learning Component:
What are the course learning outcomes in relation to service?

What can students gain from their service experience that will reinforce specific learning outcomes for the course?

How will you help your students with meaningful reflection on their service?

What types of service activities are appropriate for your course and the skills it teaches?

How may you design reflection activities in a way that offers mutual benefits for students and those being served?

How will you use student reflections to reinforce your relationship with your community partners?

How will you provide structure for your students to complete their assignments related to their service experiences?

How will your students demonstrate to others what they have learned through service? (presentations, papers, etc.)

How will you foster increased social responsibility in your students as they incorporate the skills they learn in your course?

How will you evaluate/asses what your students have learned through their service—before, during, and after their experience?

The “P.A.R.E.” Model:

**Preparation**- Prepare your students for their responsibilities by clearly defining roles and expectations ahead of time. Again, this is a collaborative effort with the college, the students, and the community partners.

**Action**- There must be a measurable way that everyone can feel their service has made a difference

**Reflection**- The students’ reflection must be an ongoing process, both before, during, and after they have completed their service.

**Evaluation**- Evaluation is critical for the success and sustainability of the service-learning program. Your evaluations should be measureable so that future semesters can maintain and build on your example. Annie can provide you with evaluation resources.
**Student Reflection:**

Just because students are participating in service does not guarantee they will have a beneficial learning experience. Service-learning can expose participants to new concepts, procedures, events, people, experiences, and places, but without processing the experience no learning will occur.

**Reflection** is one of the most important tools to ensure a successful service-learning experience. It is the means through which students can make sense of what they are seeing and doing and how their service relates to course learning outcomes. When considering the service-learning component of a syllabus, it is important to think about what type of reflection activities will best help students make the connections and get the most out of their service-learning experience.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample Reflection Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Journals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflective essays</td>
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<tr>
<td>Directed writing</td>
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<td>Group dialogue</td>
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**Semester Checklist:**

✔ Consider emailing your students through D2L before the semester starts to tell them about the service-learning opportunities. Doing so will get them excited about taking the course.

✔ Announce the service-learning component of your course to your students during the first meeting of the semester and provide specific details in your syllabus.

✔ Administer pre-service survey

✔ Describe sample service-learning opportunities for students.

✔ Administer liability and release forms

✔ Describe the steps for students to locate and secure a service-learning placement.

✔ Discuss with students the evaluation and reflection methods tied to the service-learning component, including an alternative assignment if relevant.

✔ During the semester, monitor students’ progress in fulfilling service-learning placements to ensure on time completion.

✔ Conduct periodic assignments or reflection activities to tie service to their learning objectives.

✔ Administer end-of-semester survey

✔ Think of ways to showcase student service projects (posters, videos, press release, the Service-Learning newsletter, the PSCC Service-Learning webpage, etc… Ask Annie for details)
Faculty Expectations:

- **Collaboration** - The success of Service-Learning in your course depends on your collaboration with other colleagues, with your students, and with our community partners. We encourage you to share your ideas and experiences with us and others.
- **Communication** - We want you to come to us if you need any assistance with course development or placement, with community partners, or with student issues with Service-Learning.

Support for Your Service-Learning Course:

- **FIGs/Workshops** - ongoing professional development related to Service-Learning topics
- **Collaborative Consultation** - individual, tailored assistance in developing Service-Learning activities and assessment tools to meet your specific curricular goals and outcomes
- **Site Support & Placement** - identification of appropriate service opportunities and suggested protocol through ongoing access to the S-L Partner Profile Library
- **Resource Library** - teaching tools and forms for Service-Learning, social issues education, civic responsibility, and more
- **D2L Café** - loads of information for your service-learning course including syllabus integration, assignment ideas and a place to provide feedback (Ask Annie for access)

Service-Learning Resources

Learn and Serve America’s National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
[www.servicelearning.org](http://www.servicelearning.org)

Service-Learning Ideas and Curricular Examples (SLICE)
[http://www.servicelearning.org/slice](http://www.servicelearning.org/slice)

Corporation for National & Community Service Resource Center
[www.nationalserviceresources.org](http://www.nationalserviceresources.org)

Campus Compact
[www.compact.org](http://www.compact.org)

American Association of Community Colleges
[www.aacc.nche.edu/resources/aaccprograms/horizons/pages/default.aspx](http://www.aacc.nche.edu/resources/aaccprograms/horizons/pages/default.aspx)

National Society for Experiential Education
[www.nsee.org](http://www.nsee.org)

Learn and Serve
[www.learnandserve.org](http://www.learnandserve.org)