

Service Learning Guide

2010-2011



What is service learning and why should I include it?



What kinds of agencies are available for me to partner with?



What resources are available to help me implement these projects?



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Collaborations for High-Impact Learning

“By its very definition, civic responsibility means taking a healthy role in the life of one’s community. That means that classroom lessons should be complemented by work outside the classroom. Service-learning does just that, tying community service to academic learning.”

Senator John Glenn

The John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy Chair, National Commission on Service-Learning

This Service Learning Guide is a collaborative effort of the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs, Office of Student Affairs Programs and the Teaching Excellence Center. It is based on the principle that student learning is deeply enhanced by participation in high-impact programs that promote the student’s active involvement and investment in their own learning. It is further guided by the belief that these kinds of learning experiences are often the product of dynamic collaboration between academic, student affairs and community partners. While we hope that this guide will assist faculty and students in creating these kinds of learning opportunities; it represents only the beginnings of what we believe will be a truly interdisciplinary, broach and wholly integrated approach to active learning and civic engagement. This is only the beginning.

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of countless faculty, staff and community partners who have contributed to our understanding of this topic at Stephen F. Austin State University and look forward to the continued refinement of this program over time.

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What Is Service Learning?

“Service learning is a particularly fertile way of involving young people in community service, because it ties helping others to what they are learning in the classroom. It enables them to apply academic disciplines to practical, everyday problems. In the process, it provides a compelling answer to the adolescent’s perennial question, ‘Why do I need to learn this stuff?’”

Colin Powell

Former U.S. Secretary of State

Service learning provides students with opportunities to apply what they learn in the classroom to “real world” issues in the community. It can be structured in many ways, but most often takes the form of a collaborative, closed-ended project in which individuals, groups or entire classes have the opportunity **to demonstrate and relate what they are learning in a way that helps others**. Well-designed service-learning projects ensure a balance between student learning and the needs addressed by service sites, to make sure that both are considered in any projects they create.

Service learning, by definition, has three primary components:

- Addresses a real and compelling issue or problem.
- Apply skills learned in an academic setting, and that are connected to an academic course.
- Uses purposeful reflection to help students understand what they are learning, the context in which the social issue they are addressing exists and how a society might best approach this issue.

By participating in service learning, students should:

- Demonstrate an increased commitment to the class project because the outcomes are not only theoretical, but impact the lives of real people.
- Increase their commitment to serving others by better understanding the impact of their services on the issues that people are facing.
- Gain critical thinking skills through high impact learning that maximizes both practical and theoretical elements. Studies suggest that this sort of praxis can improve not only information recall but also the ability to apply the information gained from the course content to complex issues and problems.

Reflection

Reflection is one of the most important tools necessary to ensure a successful service-learning experience. It is the means through which someone can make sense of what they are seeing and doing and learn from it. The complete reflection process is essentially never-ending. It stays with students during every step of their journey and assists them in searching through the basic questions of: what, so what, and now what? According to “The Practitioner’s Guide to Reflection in Service-Learning,” there are four important principles to keep in mind for effective critical reflection: **continuous, connected, challenging and contextualized.**

Without a commitment to **deliberate and guided reflection**, students may not learn from their experiences; in fact they might even reinforce existing prejudices. A commitment to reflection by allocating class time must be made to truly integrate academic service-learning into a course. Connected reflection is essentially the component that links the “service” the students are doing at their community organizations with the structured “learning” they are working through in the classroom. **Without structured reflection, students may fail to make the connection between the course content and its relationship to the service work.** Reflection leads to understanding, which in turn leads to more informed action. **Effective reflection leads to a better understanding of social problems and to the quest for better solutions.**

Faculty members should utilize a variety of methods and tools to conduct reflection. Whatever forms of reflection are chosen, it is important to start integrating reflection into the course early in the semester to assure that students understand the process and its connection to the service-learning experience. So, how do you do it?

Methods for helping students reflect include:

- Personal Journaling
- Presentations to Community Organizations
- Case Studies
- Small-Group Work
- Ethnographies
- Group Problem Solving
- Reflective Essays
- Artistic Projects
- Case Studies
- Histories
- Class Discussions
- Electronic Discussion Groups
- Products Created for Organizations
- Portfolios
- Multimedia Class Presentations
- Problem-Solving Papers

Principles of Good Practice for Service Learning

“A well-designed service-learning program not only provides the opportunity to serve but also encourages students, through structured reflection, to explore the meaning and moral implications of service. Ultimately, schools with service-learning programs will strengthen democracy and help students meet challenges and opportunities in an interdependent, ever-changing world.”

Gene R. Carter

*Executive Director, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Member, National Commission on Service-Learning*

Excerpted from Howard, Jeffrey, ed., Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning: Service-Learning Course Design Workbook, University of Michigan: OCSL Press, Summer 2001 pp. 16–19.

Principle 1: 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' acquisition of knowledge and skill from traditional course resources, e.g. textbooks, class discussions, library research, etc., in service learning courses we evaluate students' learning from those traditional resources, from the community service, and from the blending of the two. **So, academic credit is not awarded for simply doing service or for the quality of the service but rather for the student's demonstration of academic and civic learning based in part on service learning.**

Principle 2: Do Not Compromise Academic Rigor

There is a widespread perception in academic circles that community service is a “soft” learning resource and that there may be a temptation to compromise the academic rigor in a service learning course. Labeling service learning as a “soft” learning stimulus reflects a gross misperception. **Service learning students must not only master academic material as in traditional courses but also learn how to learn from unstructured community experiences and merge that learning with the learning from other course resources.**

Principle 3: 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. While establishing learning objectives for students is desirable for all course components, it is especially necessary and advantageous to establish learning objectives in service learning courses.

Principle 4: Establish Criteria for the Selection of Service Placements

Requiring students to serve in any community-based organization as part of a service learning course is similar to having a well thought out criterion for a text selection. **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 service 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 health care).
4. Assign community projects that meet real needs in the community as determined by the community and share the needs with students prior to the service activities.

Principle 5: Provide Educationally Sound Learning Strategies to Harvest Community Learning and Realize Course Learning Objectives

Requiring service learning students to merely list their service activities and hours as their journal assignment is tantamount to requiring student in an engineering course to log their activities and number of hours in the 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 these experiences to help meet course learning objectives.** Learning interventions that promote critical reflection, analysis, and application of service experiences enable learning.



Student participant in a Fall 2009 service learning project.

Principle 6: 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 learning strategies. Therefore, even an exemplary reflection journal assignment will yield, without sufficient support, uneven quality of responses from students.

Principle 7: Minimize the Distinction Between the Students' Community Learning Role and Classroom Learning Role

Classrooms and communities can be very different learning contexts. Often 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 learner 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 learner 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 learner roles in both contexts.

Principle 8: 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 students to engage in active student learning in the classroom, 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.**

Principle 9: Be Prepared for Variation in, and Some Loss of Control with, Student Learning Outcomes

For faculty who value homogeneity in student learning outcomes, as well as tight 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 reading) are constant for all enrolled students and under the watchful eye of the faculty member. In service learning courses, given the natural variability in service experiences and their influential role in student learning, one can anticipate greater heterogeneity in student learning outcomes and a decrease in faculty control. **Even when all service learning students are exposed to the same presentations and the same readings, instructors should expect that classroom discussions of service learning experiences will be less predictable and the content of reflective student papers/projects will be less homogeneous than in courses without a service assignment.**

Principle 10: Service Learning is Different from:

- *Volunteerism* ...where the primary emphasis is on the service being provided and the primary intended beneficiary is clearly the service recipient.
- *Community Service* ...where the primary focus [is] on the service being provided as well as the benefits the service activities have on the recipients. The students receive some benefits by learning more about how their service makes a difference.
- *Internships* ...[that] engage students in service activities primarily for the purpose of providing students with hands-on experiences that enhance their learning or understanding of issues relevant to a particular area of study.
- *Field Education* ...[that] provide students with co-curricular service opportunities that are related, but not fully integrated, with their formal academic studies. Students perform the service as a part of a program that is designed primarily to enhance students' understanding of a field of study, while also providing substantial emphasis on the service being provided.

Your Legal Questions Answered

One of the most common concerns for many faculty is, “What is my liability in this project?” While many faculty want to implement out-of-class assignments, there is a legitimate concern for liability and other legal or risk management factors. It is our hope your basic questions will be answered below. Remember the following material is just a compilation of common legal concerns and may not represent all of your questions. This is not intended to be legal advice. For any specific legal questions, please contact SFA’s general counsel (Damon Derrick at derrickdc@sfasu.edu or 936-468-4305).

Q: What are the benefits of risk management?

It is our hope the service learning partners with whom we will work will provide a great service learning experience at a very low risk to a student. However, the risk is always there. By implementing proper risk management procedures, you:

- Help reduce fear of a project by letting students know what they are getting into.
- Focus resources on our university mission to providing education.
- Protect university assets including property, employees, students, and groups we serve.

Q: How can I identify what can go wrong at a service learning site?

Everything we do in a classroom can open us up to risk. Sending students into the field is no exception. Identifying risk will usually be as simple as sitting down with the service provider and reviewing what they see as possible risks. Most service learning sites already have a good idea what their volunteers experience. Once you have done that, it is important you also:

- Identify risks that can happen to the students and determine how that risk may affect the students. You will also need to determine how often the risk can occur and what impact there may be on the university.
- Involve students by having them brainstorm some of their perceived risks.
- Communicate that risk assessment to the student and let them know what procedures they will need to follow in order to keep themselves safe.
- If an accident does occur, your liability waiver and risk notification process will be crucial. Make sure you document everything to ensure good communication coverage.
- Make sure your service agreement with the agency states what the perceived risks are and how the service learning site will assure all precautionary measures are taken.
- Remember you are only covered by SFA insurance when transporting students in a university vehicle. The use of a rental vehicle or your own personal vehicle to transport students is not advisable and opens you up to personal liability risk.
- Make sure your contract with the student includes an Assumption of Risk and Release of Liability Agreement.

Q: How do we communicate perceived risk?

The most important part of risk management is to make sure you communicate with your students and they acknowledge the risks involved. You can do this by:

- Using a Community Partner Placement Agreement form. It focuses on what to expect and provides a signed agreement for your files.
- Using a Release of Liability Waiver form. While these forms do not protect us against willful negligence, they do provide blanket protection from standard dangers and also provide valuable medical information and treatment waivers, should an accident occur.

Six Models for Integrating Service Learning

The goal of a service learning project and of introducing service learning is to connect classroom learning with an out-of-class experience. For most classes, service learning is just one component of a comprehensive educational offering. Once you decide to include service learning in your course we hope to help make it easier by providing leads for your students and, more importantly, by providing the following design template to make the assignment as “turnkey” as possible.

Author and educator Kerrissa Heffernan has outlined six different models for faculty to consider when developing service-learning into their discipline.

Discipline-Based Service-Learning Model

In this model, students are expected to have a presence in the community throughout the semester and reflect on their experiences on a regular basis using course content as a basis for their analysis and understanding. The link between course content and community experience must be made very clear to students.

Benefit: The students' education becomes multifaceted, and their overall understanding of theoretical concepts improves.

Problem-Based Service-Learning Model

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. For example: architecture students might design a park; business students might develop a web site; botany students might identify non-native plants and suggest eradication methods. Caution is needed when using this model of service-learning; although it can be highly effective for some disciplines, promoting the idea of students as “experts” and communities as “clients” can re-emphasize the disparities between universities and communities and re-instill the “ivory tower” phenomenon.

Benefit: Problem-based service-learning often alleviates some of the logistical difficulties common in a weekly commitment.

Capstone Course Model

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.

Benefit: Capstone courses offer an excellent way to help students transition from the world of theory to the world of practice.

Service Internship Model

This approach is more intense than typical service-learning courses, with students working as many as 10 to 20 hours a week in a community setting. 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 on-going faculty-guided reflection to challenge the students to analyze their new experiences using discipline-based theories. Service internships focus on reciprocity, the idea that the community and the student benefit equally from the experience, but the level of oversight required by a community partner supervisor can be highly demanding.

Benefit: Service internships offer students the opportunity to develop valuable skills while simultaneously seeing how their skills can contribute to community.

Undergraduate Community-Based Action Research Model

Community-based action research is similar to an independent study option for the student who is highly experienced in community work. This approach can 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. This model assumes that students are competent in time management, are self-directed learners, and can negotiate diverse communities. These assumptions can become problematic, and the ramifications of students' failures can impact the community.

Benefit: This method of service-learning is effective with small classes and groups of students.

Directed Study Additional/Extra Credit Model

Students can receive extra credit in a course by making special arrangements with the instructor to complete additional work or explore a subject in more depth. The course instructor serves as the advisor for the directed study option. The department must approve the extra credit, and the student must formally register for those additional credits during the drop-add period at the beginning of the semester.

Benefit: Students choosing this option are typically self-directed and motivated.

Which model is most appropriate for you?

- Consider connections between your course objectives and your departmental objectives.
- Consider connections between the institutional mission and the community's expectations.
- Consider your teaching and learning goals and the potential expectations of your students.

Heffernan, Kerrissa. Fundamentals of Service-Learning Course Construction. RI: Campus Compact, 2001, pp 2-7, 9.

Important Considerations for Service Learning

Begin by thinking about your course and how it can be connected to community issues and concerns. Consider the following set of questions as you begin to design service learning into your course:

1. What are my course objectives and goals?
2. Are there community issues that are directly connected to my course?
3. Is there a connection between my course objectives/goals and issues in the community?
4. How would service learning enhance my teaching?
5. What am I hoping my students will learn through working in the community?
6. What questions do I want my students to raise and answer by the end of the semester?
7. How will I help students connect their work in the community with the course content?
8. What theories or knowledge base will my students need in order to understand this connection?
9. In what capacity or role do I want my students to be engaged in the community?
10. Which service learning model fits best with my course learning objectives?
11. Will the service learning community work be mandatory for all students or optional?
12. What in my current course syllabus am I willing to modify in order to integrate service learning?
13. How many hours of community work will I require of my students?
14. For what percentage of the course grade will the community work account?
15. Will I require my students to maintain an hourly log to verify their hours in the community?
16. How will I assess the students' learning and evaluate the service learning component?

Service learning should include these elements:

- Students provide a meaningful and needed service to the community, identified and asked for by the community.
- Relationships between the University and the community site strive to be a reciprocal partnership.
- Connections between the course objectives and service activities be clearly conceptualized and articulated.
- Faculty guide students in understanding the relevancy of their work in the community to the course objectives.
- Faculty provide opportunities for students to reflect upon their experiences in a variety of mediums.
- Classroom activities allow students to learn from other class members, in addition to the instructor.

Remember! Service learning syllabi should:

1. Clearly explain the role of service in the course.
2. Demonstrate how service connects to course content.
3. Clarify why service is the pedagogy of choice.
4. Describe what the service component will entail.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How do I teach service learning with an enrollment of 70+ students?

Service learning has been implemented in courses all over the country in classes with large enrollments. Smaller enrollment courses are more manageable when coordinating service learning, but effective service learning can be done with larger enrollment courses if the appropriate infrastructure is there. A key element to having service learning work well in large courses is the ability to run small, facilitated discussion sections so students have adequate reflection opportunities. Furthermore, you can expand the service learning assignment and offer a number of experiences so students can gravitate to a service site that best fits their interests.

Q: Is service-learning appropriate for students in introductory and lower-level courses?

Service learning has been successfully utilized by educators in freshman-level courses for years, as well as in upper-level courses. The key to making service learning successful is carefully selecting community site placements where students are given appropriate levels of responsibility for their skill level. Service learning for a students in the early part of their college career should, however, be more inline with a volunteerism approach. The key is to introduce service learning and not connect it too closely with any student's major. Given the rate at which students change their major, too much involvement might be a bit overwhelming.

Q: Do students have time to do service-learning when so many of them work and go to school?

Most students will have time to fit service learning into their schedules; in fact many students who say they don't think they have time to volunteer before doing service learning will continue their work in the community after the course ends. Due to the variety of community placements, there are opportunities and needs for students twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. However, not all students may be able to accommodate a service-learning course. For this reason, we suggest making service-learning a part but not the entire course or if you want all your students to do service learning extensively, decide whether you will allow one or two students to make special arrangements if they cannot do service learning. If you are not going to allow special arrangements, state this very clearly the first week of the course and in your syllabus so these students can withdraw from the course.

Q: What if something happens to the students or their actions result in damages to someone else?

All service learning students should be fully informed about their placement and knowingly consent to undertake any risks associated with that placement by reading, signing, and turning in the completed Student Participant Agreement form. In most cases the organizations which provide the service learning experience will be responsible for the acts of the students working with them and will assume responsibility for the student.

Q: What are common student challenges with service-learning?

Students at other institutions across the country often are concerned about:

- Not enough interaction between staff and students in the community
- Not enough interaction between students and the community population
- Not enough work to do once the students arrive at their community site
- Dull and uninteresting work and feeling ignored or overlooked to do certain duties

- Being unclear about their work duties and their relevance to overall organization mission
- Frustration with failure to accomplish desired goals
- Lack of training for specific duties
- Feeling like they are treated differently than paid staff, feeling like outsiders
- Lack of staff support to answer questions or provide guidance for work

That is why your involvement is so important. By encouraging constant dialogue and proper reflection you can evaluate the worthiness of a service learning site and decide if the effort you and your students have used is worth it.

Q: Why is it so critical that service learning link with academic course offerings?

Two words: Academic energy. While we all know college students who volunteer all of the time, the lack of reflection ensures the volunteering project is short lived and understanding is not gained.

Service Learning Grants

At Stephen F. Austin State University, we hope to encourage all faculty and students to value and participate in service learning activities which enhance the community environment, further the student's understanding of the world and connect to the student's academic program. Improving service learning opportunities and partnerships is identified as an area of high importance by the university in its Strategic Plan 2013.

SFASU Strategic Plan 2013

Initiative 5

“Create new learning opportunities through additional interdisciplinary, international, **service learning, and civic engagement experiences.**”

Strategy 3

“**Enhance reflective components of co-curricular community service** and civic engagement projects to increase learning benefits.”

Strategy 5

“**Increase service learning opportunities in each college.**”

<http://www.sfasu.edu/strategicplan/initiative5.asp>

In order to support this university perspective the Office of Student Affairs Programs offers a grant program for faculty to access funding for worthy service learning projects. Grants of up to \$500 are available each fall and spring semester. All faculty and staff who are interested in implementing a service learning project that is connected to the academic curriculum are invited to apply. *If awarded a grant, the same project will not be considered for funding in consecutive semesters. The faculty or staff member is welcome to submit a different service learning project for consideration.*

Examples of service-learning projects which have recently received grant funding are:

- *An animal science class hosting an artificial insemination workshop for local 4-H students*
- *The Rusk Birthday Project, a birthday celebration for patients at Rusk State Hospital*
- *Theater stagecraft class collaborating with Habitat for Humanity on construction work*
- *Restoration projects at Zion Hill Parsonage*
- *Drum Doctors - music students teaching local band directors how to maintain their school's equipment to save on costly repairs*

To be considered for one of these grants, the proposed service learning project must comply with our definition of service learning:

Service learning provides students with opportunities to apply what they learn in the classroom to “real world” issues in the community. It can be structured in many ways, but most often takes the form of a collaborative, closed-ended project in which individuals, groups or entire classes have the opportunity to demonstrate and relate what they are learning in a way that helps others. Well-designed service learning projects ensure a balance between student learning and the needs addressed by service sites, to make sure that both are considered in any projects they create.

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- *Addresses a real and compelling issue or problem.*
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- *Gain critical thinking skills through high impact learning that maximizes both practical and theoretical elements. Studies suggest that this sort of praxis can improve not only information recall but also the ability to apply the information gained from the course content to complex issues and problems.*

While community service in and of itself is a valuable and rewarding experience for students, projects that simply have students perform community service will not be considered. Projects must include a connection to the classroom curriculum or an academic discipline.

Service learning grants can help to pay for expenses related to project development and delivery, including but not limited to:

- Travel to service learning sites
- Supplies and equipment needed to complete the project
- Printing services
- Resource materials

The use of grant money must comply with SFA's purchasing policies. **Once chosen, grant recipients must make an appointment with Kay Lee Custer (klcuster@sfasu.edu; 936-468-1018) to learn the terms of fund allocation. Recipients should not spend money out of pocket and expect to be reimbursed – it is the responsibility of the recipient to meet with Kay Lee Custer to find out how the funds can be spent in compliance with SFA's policies.** Any funds not used will revert to the Student Affairs Programs budget.

Deadlines

- Spring 2011 grant applications are due by 5 p.m. on Friday, December 10, 2010.
- Fall 2011 grant applications are due by 5 p.m. on Friday, May 6, 2011.

Submit completed applications via e-mail to jfbouldin@sfasu.edu or to BPSC Room 3.307. An electronic version of the grant application is available at <http://www.sfasu.edu/studentaffairs/97.asp>. Applications must be typed. Applicants will be notified of the committee's decisions no more than one week later.

Selection Process

A committee, comprised of staff members from the Office of Student Affairs Programs and members of the Service Learning Advisory Board, will review the applications and rank them according to an impartial evaluation system that is based on the characteristics of service learning outlined above. The amount of funds available varies from semester to semester, and the number of projects chosen will be based on the amount of funds available.

Commitment

Grant recipients must submit a final report no later than one month after the end of the semester in which they implemented the funded project. The final report form can be found at <http://studentvoice.com/sfa/servicelearningproject2010>. Pictures are encouraged in order to help visually document the service experience and can be emailed to jfbouldin@sfasu.edu. Recipients also agree to attend the Office of Student Affairs Programs' Community Partners Breakfast the following semester, and may be asked to present (via a short Power Point or a display board) the results of the service learning project (what the students did, results of the assessment and reflection, etc.).

Still have questions? Contact Jamie Bouldin, Assistant Director for Leadership and Service, at jfbouldin@sfasu.edu or 936-468-1088.

Service Learning Grant Application

Please note that there is an electronic version of this application available at <http://www.sfasu.edu/studentaffairs/97.asp> or by emailing jfbouldin@sfasu.edu. Applications must be typed.

Contact Information

Name:

Organization or class:

Phone:

E-mail:

Answer the following questions with as much detail as you can provide.

- Please describe the proposed service learning project and how it enhances/supplements the academic curriculum for this course.
- What group, organization, or agency will you be partnering with for this project? Have you made contact with the community partner(s), and are they willing to work with you on this project, should you receive funding?
- How will this project benefit the community partner(s) or the individuals these agencies serve? How have you determined that this project will meet the needs of the community partner(s)?
- Please describe how you plan to communicate with the community partner(s).
- Please describe your plans for doing pre- and post-assessment activities with participants. What opportunities will students have to engage in reflection? In addition, what are your plans for evaluating the students' participation in the project?
- How will you measure the impact this project had on the community partner and the targeted population? How will you deliver feedback and data to the community partner?
- How will you publicize your project to your department or organization, the campus community, and the general public?
- Please provide a summary of anticipated expenses for this project. Grants are limited to a maximum of \$500, but aim to be conservative in your spending. Please be as specific.

E-mail completed applications to jfbouldin@sfasu.edu or deliver to BPSC 3.307.

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Finding a Partner for Service Learning Projects

There are numerous community agencies in the Nacogdoches area that are eager to partner with you for service learning projects. We offer several avenues toward meeting and engaging with one of these deserving partners.

First, each semester the Office of Leadership and Service and the Service Learning Advisory Board sponsors the Community Partners Breakfast. This free event features a service fair, where representatives from local agencies set up display boards and are available to discuss their agency's needs and opportunities for service. The fair is followed by a breakfast and presentations from some of the prior semester's grant recipients, as well as a time for agency representatives to introduce themselves and discuss their group's needs.

The Fall 2010 Community Partners Breakfast is scheduled for 8 a.m. Wednesday, September 1 in the BPSC Twilight Ballroom. The Spring 2011 Community Partners Breakfast is at 8 a.m. Wednesday, February 2 in the Twilight Ballroom. RSVP to Jamie Bouldin at jfbouldin@sfasu.edu or by calling (936) 468-1088.

Second, the Office of Leadership and Service posts community agency profiles on its website, <http://www.sfasu.edu/studentaffairs/97.asp>. Each profile is available as a Microsoft Word document and can be downloaded and saved for future reference. Most of the agencies in the database are affiliated with the Nacogdoches County United Way and represent the most established and stable group of non-profits in our community. In addition, each has opted to participate in our program and will likely be open to various ideas and concepts. The information on each profile is provided by the agency and updated regularly. The list of agencies is not exhaustive - faculty members often find creative ways to partner with offices or groups outside of the non-profit agencies in town. We encourage faculty to think outside the box and find a partner that suits the needs and academic pursuits of the course. Our list of agency profiles is meant to serve as a starting point.

Once you have perused the online profiles, if you are still stuck in the search for a service learning partner, please contact Jamie Bouldin at (936) 468-1088 or jfbouldin@sfasu.edu. Jamie is familiar with many of the agency needs in the area and can help narrow the search for an agency partner.

Finally, you can sign up for our twice-monthly service e-newsletter. The newsletter is full of local service opportunities, which are provided to our office by the community agencies. This is a great way to discover needs in the community that you previously did not know existed and can open doors for future service-learning partnerships. E-mail sfavolunteers@gmail.com to sign up.

It is integral to the continued success of the program that each of us are good stewards of these resources by setting clear expectations, guiding students to only promise what can be delivered, and working to make sure that students deliver what they promise. A poor experience can result in a tainted relationship between the university and the community agencies, so we must work together to ensure that all parties walk away satisfied.

Local Community Agencies

No matter what the need or population in the Nacogdoches area, there is likely a non-profit agency ready and willing to serve. Like most non-profit agencies around the country, our local agencies are plagued with staffing and budget shortages, making them ideal partners for service learning projects in which all parties (the agency, the students and the population served) ultimately benefit. Students bring in new ideas and fresh perspectives while providing a valuable source of budget-friendly labor for the agency. Best of all, students can learn so much from their service to these groups - faculty can use these opportunities to strengthen connections to the academic curriculum while imparting the importance and value of service to the students. The Office of Leadership and Service has done most of the legwork for you by gathering information about many of the local non-profit agencies. This list is not exhaustive, and we encourage faculty to use both this list and other contacts they may have in the community to find an appropriate partner for service learning projects.

The agencies are presented here in alphabetical order, and this information is also available on our website, www.sfasu.edu/studentaffairs/97.asp.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Council of Deep East Texas (ADAC)

The mission of ADAC is to provide a continuum of services to those in our community in need of prevention, intervention and short-term counseling for tobacco, alcohol and other drugs of abuse.

Contact: Phyllis Grandgeorge, Executive Director
Agency Email: adac@suddenlinkmail.com
Phone: 936-564-2446
Physical Address: 1407 N. University Drive, Suite B-2, Nacogdoches, TX 75961
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 384, Lufkin, TX 75902
Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

American Red Cross

The mission of the American Red Cross is to provide relief to victims of disaster and help people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies.

Contact: Glenna Harkness, Service Center Manager
Agency Email: redcross@suddenlinkmail.com
Phone: 936-564-2101
Physical Address: 1905 East Denman, Lufkin, TX 75901
Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday

Boys and Girls Club of Deep East Texas

The mission of the Boys and Girls Club of Deep East Texas is to provide daily leadership, guidance, and inspiration to help young boys and girls grow up to become responsible and contributing adults in our society. With a special concern for at-risk youth, we help youth to help themselves realize their own potential for positive growth. The facility provides programs based on the principles of behavioral guidance which will achieve the health, social, educational, vocational, character and leadership development of our members.

Contact: Jeff Woods, Executive Director
Agency Email: woodsjd@bgcdet.org
Phone: 936-560-6844
Physical Address: 2712 Park Street, Nacogdoches, TX 75961
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 631345, Nacogdoches, TX 75961
Hours of Operation: 3 to 6 p.m. September through May; 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. June through August

Community Rx Help

The mission of Community Rx Help is to provide assistance to low-to-moderate income persons in obtaining prescription medications needed to maintain optimal health.

Contact: Tricia Hand, Executive Director
Agency Email: commrxhelpnac@yahoo.com
Phone: 936-568-0055
Physical Address: 1210 Douglass Rd, Nacogdoches, TX 75964
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 631563, Nacogdoches, TX 75963
Hours of Operation: (open to public) 9 a.m. to noon, 1 to 3 p.m., Monday through Thursday (staff time) 3 to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, all day Friday

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Deep East Texas

The mission of CASA is to train and supervise volunteers to speak in court for the best interest of abused and neglected foster care children.

Contact: Rebecca Carlton, Executive Director
Agency Email: casa.det@sbcglobal.net
Phone: 936-560-4711
Physical Address: 117 North St. Ste 2, Nacogdoches, TX 75961
Mailing Address: 422 East Main, Box 243, Nacogdoches, TX 75961
Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

Nacogdoches Homelessness Prevention Coalition

The mission of the Nacogdoches Homelessness Prevention Coalition is to empower individuals currently experiencing a housing crisis with the ability to maintain stable housing and promote self-sufficiency.

Contact: Angela Kirk, Encourager Program Coordinator
Agency Email: angela@loveincnac.org
Phone: 936-564-6444
Physical Address: 917 Ruby St., Nacogdoches, TX 75961
Hours of Operation: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council

The mission of the Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council is to build girls of courage, character and confidence, who make the world a better place.

Contact: Dawn Francis
Agency Email: dfrancis@sjgs.org
Phone: 936-634-5813; 936-634-4688
Physical Address: 1202 College Drive, Lufkin, TX 75915-1240
Hours of Operation: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Friday
10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the 1st Saturday of the month

GODTEL Ministries

The mission of GODTEL is to meet the inner spiritual needs of individuals and feed, clothe, and house the homeless and less fortunate of Nacogdoches County.

Contact: Nancy Gentry, Assistant Director
Agency Email: godtel@minister.com
Phone: 936-569-7914
Physical Address: 330 E. Main Street, Nacogdoches, TX 75961-5258
Hours of Operation: 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day (open all year)

Goodwill Industries of East Texas

The mission of Goodwill Industries of East Texas is to empower individuals, strengthen families, and build communities – one job at a time.

Contact: Nikki Roberts
Agency Email: Nikki.roberts@lufkingoodwill.org
Phone: 936-632-8838
Physical Address: 301 Hill St., Lufkin, TX 75904
Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

Habitat for Humanity of Nacogdoches

The mission of Habitat for Humanity is to sponsor specific projects in habitat development, starting with the construction of modest but adequate housing.

Contact: Miki Lynn
Agency Email: hfhn@sbcglobal.net
Phone: 936-564-3538
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 630683, Nacogdoches, TX 75963

Health Horizons of East Texas, Inc.

The mission of Health Horizons is to empower and serve the people of Deep East Texas with needs related to HIV/AIDS and other health issues.

Contact: Dr. Wilbert Brown, Jr
Agency Email: hhet@sbcglobal.net
Phone: 936-569-8240
Physical Address: 412 North Street Ste. F, Nacogdoches, TX 75963
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 635022, Nacogdoches, TX 75963
Hours of Operation: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

Helping House

The mission of Helping House is to provide early intervention behavioral therapy for children with autism and other developmental delays, and promoting the educational needs of parents, educators, and professionals.

Contact: Amanda Johnson
Agency Email: ajohnson@the-helping-house.org
Phone: 936-560-5624
Physical Address: 919 Jack Lock, Nacogdoches, TX 75964
Mailing Address: PO Box 631513, Nacogdoches, TX 75963
Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday

Keep Nacogdoches Beautiful

The mission of Keep Nacogdoches Beautiful is to enhance our community by encouraging individual responsibility. KNB is an affiliate of both Keep Texas Beautiful and Keep America Beautiful. These organizations offer support and training for volunteers, as well as sponsor some of our programs and events.

Contact: Buzz Dutton
Agency Email: info@keepnacbeautiful.org
Phone: 936-560-5624
Physical Address: 2516 North Street, Nacogdoches, TX 75965

Love in the Name of Christ

The mission of Love INC is to mobilize the Church to transform lives and communities in the name of Christ.

Contact: Patti Goodrum; Laura Williford
Agency Email: patti@loveincnac.org ; laura@loveincnac.org
Phone: 936-569-8555
Physical Address: 917 Ruby Street, Nacogdoches, TX 75961
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 630423, Nacogdoches, TX 75963
Hours of Operation: 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday

Main Street Program

The mission of the Main Street Program is to revitalize historic downtown and neighborhood commercial districts.

Contact: Sarah O'Brien, Main Street Manager
Agency Email: obriens@ci.nacogdoches.tx.us
Phone: 936-559-2576
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 635030, Nacogdoches, TX 75963

Nacogdoches Convention and Visitor's Bureau

The mission of the Nacogdoches Convention and Visitor's Bureau is to encourage, enhance and promote tourism-related business and special events in the Nacogdoches area; to further the promotion of tourism and publicity for the area; and to promote Nacogdoches as a tourist destination throughout the state, regionally, nationally and internationally.

Contact: Samantha Mora
Agency Email: samantha@visitnacogdoches.org
Phone: 936-564-7351 or 1-888-OLDEST-TOWN
Physical Address: 200 E. Main St. Nacogdoches, TX 75961
Hours of Operation: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Friday; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday; 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on holidays

Nacogdoches County Aging Committee

The mission of the Nacogdoches County Aging Committee is to provide services to the aged population of Nacogdoches County to help older individuals lead independent, meaningful, and dignified lives in their own homes and communities for as long as possible.

Contact: Tammy Blank, Director
Agency Email: tammyblank1@suddenlinkmail.com
Phone: 936-569-6350
Physical Address: 621 Harris St., Nacogdoches, TX 75964
Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday

Nacogdoches Treatment Center

The mission of the Nacogdoches Treatment Center is to enrich the lives of individuals who have Alzheimer's/Dementia, individuals who are physically or mentally challenged, and the families who support and care for them.

Contact: Kathy Strong, Executive Director
Agency Email: ntc@suddenlinkmail.com
Phone: 936-569-7173
Physical Address: 119 Hughes, Nacogdoches, TX 75961
Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday

O'Malley Alley Cat Organization

The mission of the O'Malley Alley Cat Organization is to spay, neuter, release and manage the local feral cat population.

Contact: Diana Hensley
Agency Email: feralaristocat@yahoo.com
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 633452, Nacogdoches, TX 75963-3452

Salvation Army

The mission of the Salvation Army is to meet the spiritual and physical needs of small Texas communities through coordinated efforts between volunteer teams, management and staff.

Contact: LuVenia Owens, Region 1 Service Unit Representative
Agency Email: Luvenia_owens@uss.salvationarmy.org
Phone: 936-568-0900
Physical Address: 118 East Hospital Street, Nacogdoches, TX 75961
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 630845, Nacogdoches, TX 75963
Hours of Operation: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday

Solid Foundation Association

The mission of the Solid Foundation Association is to establish and build a solid foundation that stimulates educational, social, economic and spiritual growth in the Nacogdoches community for children, youth and adult residents.

Contact: John B. Cannings, President/Acting Director
Agency Email: solidfoundation@suddenlinkmail.com
Phone: 936-569-7707
Physical Address: 2220 E. Main Street, Nacogdoches, TX 75961
Hours of Operation: 4 to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday

Family Crisis Center (Formerly the Women's Shelter of Deep East Texas)

The mission of the Family Crisis Center is to enhance the safety of women, children, and men by providing crisis intervention and advocacy services to reduce and prevent the occurrence of family violence and sexual assault through education and community awareness.

Contact: Margi Preston, Executive Director
Agency Email: prestonwset@suddenlinkmail.com
Phone: 936-639-1681
Physical Address: 2723 Durst Street, Nacogdoches, TX 75964
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 510, Lufkin, TX 75902
Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

Service Learning Waiver (Example)

The SFA General Counsel's office is your best resource for drawing up waivers that are specific to your project and needs. Contact Damon Derrick, General Counsel, at 936-468-4305 or derrickdc@sfasu.edu for all legal inquiries.

*Stephen F. Austin State University
Waiver and Hold Harmless Agreement*

Event, Date *****

SFA Waiver of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement

1. In consideration for participating in ***** and other valuable consideration, I hereby RELEASE, WAIVE, DISCHARGE AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE Stephen F. Austin State University, the Board of Regents, The State of Texas, their officers, servants, agents, and employees (hereinafter referred to as RELEASEES) from any and all liability, claims, demands, actions and causes of action whatsoever arising out of or related to any loss, damage, or injury, including death, that may be sustained by me, or to any property belonging to me, WHETHER CAUSED BY THE NEGLIGENCE OF THE RELEASEES, or otherwise, while participating in such activity, or while in, on or upon the premises where the activity is being conducted or in transportation to and from said premises.
2. To the best of my knowledge, I can fully participate in this activity. I am fully aware of risks and hazards connected with the activity, including but not limited to the risks as noted herein, and I hereby elect to voluntarily participate in said activity, and to enter the above-named premises and engage in such activity knowing that the activity may be hazardous to me and my property. I VOLUNTARILY ASSUME FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY RISKS OF LOSS, PROPERTY DAMAGE OR PERSONAL INJURY, INCLUDING DEATH, that may be sustained by me, or any loss or damage to property owned by me, as a result of being engaged in such an activity, WHETHER CAUSED BY THE NEGLIGENCE OF RELEASEES or otherwise.
3. I further hereby AGREE TO INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS THE RELEASEES from any loss, liability, damage or costs, including court costs and attorney's fees, that may incur due to my participation in said activity, WEATHER CAUSED BY NEGLIGENCE OF RELEASEES or otherwise.
4. It is my express intent that this Release and Hold Harmless Agreement shall bind the members of my family and spouse (if any), if I am alive, and my heirs, assigns and personal representative, if I am not alive, shall be deemed as a RELEASE, WAIVER, DISCHARGE AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE the above named RELEASEES. I hereby further agree that this Waiver of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas.
5. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE UNIVERSITY WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY MEDICAL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH AN INJURY I MAY SUSTAIN.
6. I further agree to become familiar with the rules and regulations of the University concerning student conduct and not to violate said rules of any directive or instruction made by the person or persons in charge of said activity and that I will further assume the complete risk of any activity done in violation of any rule or directive or instruction.
7. I also understand that I should and am urged by SFA to obtain adequate health and accident insurance to cover and personal injury to myself which may be sustained during the activity or the transportation to and from said activity. IN SIGNING THE RELEASE, I ACKNOWLEDGE AND REPRESENT THAT I have read the foregoing Waiver of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement, understand it and sign it voluntarily as my own free act and deed; no oral representations, statements or inducements, apart from the foregoing written agreement, have been made; I am at least eighteen (18) years of age and fully competent; and I execute this Release for full, adequate and complete consideration fully intending to be bound by the same.

Participant: _____

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand on this _____
Date

Parent/guardian must sign if under 18 years old: _____

