



Part II highlights service-learning programs at colleges and universities around the nation and will demonstrate the dynamic impact they have on local and state government organizations.

Service-Learning Through Colleges and Universities, Part II

by Linda Kiltz and Deborah Ball

Service-learning has the potential to dramatically change the quality of our communities by harnessing the power of students, faculty, and community leaders in a broad range of community service projects.

Service-learning is different from other service programs because it is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. The core concept driving this educational strategy is that by combining service objectives and learning objectives—along with the intent to show measurable change in both the recipient and the provider of the service—the result is a radically effective transformative method of teaching students and enhancing our communities.

This article explains the different types of service-learning programs adopted in higher education and highlights some of the most innovative service-learning programs in our nation's colleges and universities.

Marquette University—Milwaukee, Wisconsin

At many colleges and universities, students are introduced to service-learning through participation in one-time or short-term experiences. First-year college students can be introduced to service-learning and their local community through such activities as cleaning up a neighborhood, preparing and serving a meal at a homeless shelter, or volunteering to assist older adults in winterizing their homes.

Since 1989, Marquette University has held an annual, single-day service activity called Hunger Clean-Up. Through education and advocacy, Hunger

Clean-Up makes students aware of the issues of hunger and homelessness in Milwaukee. Each year, student leadership teams and community agencies interview homeless community members to determine the projects or programs to fund and to identify work sites.

participated in Hunger Clean-Up—raising \$20,000 and working at 67 sites across Milwaukee.

For many students, Hunger Clean-Up is their first foray into community service at Marquette—and a springboard to other community service work. Vince Howard, one

Willamette students, faculty, and staff dedicated more than 66,000 hours to service during the 2008–09 academic year, with almost 23,000 service hours spent on programs assisting disadvantaged youth.

One of the programs honored was a five-day orientation program for incoming students called New Student Orientation to Community Outreach (NSOCO). This program provides students with the opportunity to engage in direct service in the Salem community, explore various social justice issues, and meet other new students with similar interests. Activities include cleaning Oregon beaches, painting transitional shelters for women and children, assisting seniors at retirement centers, cooking dinner for homeless youth, painting playground equipment, and cleaning up public parks.

According to incoming freshmen Laura Braithwaite, “NSOCO made my transition to college so much easier and more enjoyable than I know it could have been without the confidence and sense of self I developed during Jump Start. I have been able to carry these developments with me throughout the semester, enabling me to make more genuine friends and to become more involved in on-campus and off-campus activities. NSOCO added another level to my college experience.”

While one-day and short-term service-learning is often beneficial to students and communities, the quality of learning that occurs may be suspect if students engage in little or no structured reflection on how their service is linked to their academic discipline. Thus, many colleges and universities have moved from community service to integrating service-learning into the curriculum.



Prior to the event, team leaders receive training about the particular agencies that are Hunger Clean-Up sites, and all participants receive on-site orientations about the organizations to which they are assigned. On the day of Hunger Clean-Up, teams of students, alumni, and faculty are sent to different worksites—including homeless shelters, food pantries, neighborhood parks or elementary schools—to perform clean-up tasks.

Having forged relationships with more than 150 agencies in the city, Hunger Clean-Up has made as big an impact on Milwaukee as it has on Marquette students. Hunger Clean-Up has raised about \$400,000 in donations, and more than 30,000 volunteers have participated in this program in the past 20 years. In 2010, 1,400 students and other members of the Marquette community

of the co-coordinators for the 2010 Hunger Clean-Up, says, “We do important work. Even though those tasks seem simplistic, the fact that the community sees that we want to take that step, to do some good, and to give up ourselves to the community is important.” Introducing incoming students to service-learning is accomplished through day-long activities as well as through new student orientation programs.

Willamette University— Salem, Oregon

Willamette University was one of only six colleges and universities nationwide to receive the Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll Presidential Award, the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to service-learning and civic engagement.

Undergraduate and graduate courses that employ service-learning provide students with opportunities to encounter competing definitions of the public good, diverse viewpoints on the root causes of social problems, and the challenges of applying abstract concepts and theories to real world problems.

Denver University— Denver, Colorado

Service-learning can be incorporated into any academic discipline as a stand-alone course, as a fourth-credit option, or as a required or optional course component. The fourth-credit option enables students to add a fourth credit to a regular three-credit course by contracting to do a significant number of hours (40 to 50) of community service and relating the service to the course.

Typically, students complete a learning contract, which must be approved by both the faculty member and the community organization. For example, at Denver University students taking the undergraduate political science class *Civil Rights and Liberties* have a service option of working with Project Homeless Connect that links homelessness and civil rights. In the sociology department at Denver University, students taking the course *Social Movements* have the option of participating in a real-world social movement, the Colorado Progressive Coalition, and they participate in voter education and registration activities.

Arizona State University— Phoenix, Arizona

In a stand-alone course on service-learning, students focus more on the service experience and learn about the importance of civic engagement and

volunteerism. Arizona State University's University Service Learning (USL) provides students with the opportunity to link collegiate coursework with meaningful community service that enhances the learning process, develops leadership skills, and promotes lifelong civic engagement.

USL courses are different from the traditional service-learning models in which instructors add a service-learning component to a preexisting class. These stand-alone service-learning courses are designed for any student at any level from any discipline.

All USL courses contain two components: service and academic coursework. Students dedicate service hours (70 hours for lower division and 100 hours for upper division) at a pre-approved site (in-

skills and knowledge applicable to each student's program of study and career goals, while providing valuable service to a low-income population in need or towards the greater good of the community. The long-term commitment to service allows students to gain a deeper understanding of community needs and issues as well as the ability to assess realistic impact that can be made by an individual.

"At ASU we are committed to making a positive impact in Arizona, the nation, and the world," says Kimberly de los Santos, associate vice president of university initiatives. "What we are most proud of is not only the service-learning and community service hours, but the invaluable relationships we have with our community partners that enable us to make a difference."

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cluding Title I K-12 schools, youth programs, health services, social services, environmental programs, and government agencies), directly serving a population "in need" or supporting activities that contribute to the greater good of the community.

A weekly seminar and academic assignments facilitate critical thinking and a deeper understanding of cultural diversity, citizenship, and social justice issues, and how to contribute to positive social change in the community. The courses are also designed to provide real-world experiences that exercise academic

Former president of Portland State University, Daniel O. Bernstine, adds, "My vision is of a university so thoroughly engaged with its community that people throughout the region refer to it as 'our university.'"

Arizona State University began offering USL courses in 1993, and the program continues to grow and evolve, partnering with more than 120 community agencies and schools. During the 2009–10 academic year, 466 USL students contributed 56,220 hours of service to the community—including tutoring at the local public schools.



Loyola University— Baltimore, Maryland

In some colleges and universities, service is a significant course requirement or a critical component of the core curriculum. At Loyola University, service is an integral part of a broad range of courses including biology, education, history, philosophy, and psychology. In these service-learning courses, students are required to work in a community organization for 20 hours during the semester and this experience is linked to the course content and learning objectives.

Collaborative Programs

Denver University offers many courses that include service-learning, such as Dr. Lisa Dale's first-year seminar course called Wild Colorado in which students work closely with the U.S. Forest Service's Wilderness Program to collect data for wilderness management as its service-learning component.

The University of Georgia maintains a service-learning course inventory that lists all of the courses by college and departments. For example, the Department of Management Information

Systems' course called Master of Internet Technology Project, has students consult with a client to determine software needs and then complete the initial stages of software development.

Portland State University's Community-Based Learning curriculum annually offers more than 400

community-based learning courses, serves more than 400 community organizations, and places more than 6,500 students in community-university partnerships.

Texas A&M University (and Community College) (TAMUCC)— Corpus Christi, Texas

At Texas A&M—Corpus Christi, service-learning has been implemented as part of the Master of Public Administration Capstone Course and is an example of how service-learning can be integrated into disciplinary capstone projects. This type of service-learning project integrates students' cumulative knowledge in a specific discipline and demonstrates that integration through an applied research project in the community. The capstone project approach to service-learning helps students make connections between service and their discipline and understand the relationship of scholarship to service.

At TAMUCC, students who choose to do a service-learning project must work a minimum of eight hours per week for a total of 120 hours in the selected community

organization, maintain a work log and weekly reflective journal, and complete specific research project identified by the organization in advance with the faculty mentor and student.

Over the past two years, 10 students in this program have completed five applied research projects for the City of Corpus Christi, saving the city tens of thousands of dollars. For example, in 2009, three students partnered with the Weed and Seed Program in the City's Department of Parks and Recreation to conduct an applied research project.

In this project, students analyzed three years of crime statistics data to designate a new Weed and Seed site, to conduct a community survey in the new site to identify crime problems, to identify community partners and stakeholders to help solve these crime and safety issues, and to prepare a grant application for additional funds from the Department of Justice.

While this program is in its infancy, it has made a difference in the community and greatly enhanced student learning. Harold Smith, director of the Weed and Seed Program, reported that the work of the capstone students not only helped to establish a new Weed and Seed area and critical partnerships in the community, but also saved the city more than \$50,000 in consulting fees.

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Table 1 | Examples of Different Types of Service-Learning Programs

Type of Program	College or University	Name of Program	Website
One-time or short-term service-learning experiences	Washington & Lee University	Volunteer Venture (orientation)	www.wlu.edu/x23240.xml
	University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill	APPLES (Assisting People in Planning Learning Experiences in Service)	www.unc.edu/apples
	Duke University	Duke Center for Civic Engagement	civicengagement.duke.edu/main/about-us/about-us
Stand-alone courses	Arizona State University	University Service Learning	service.learning@asu.edu
In the curriculum	University of Georgia	Office of Service Learning	www.servicelearning.uga.edu/blog/courses/service-learning-course-database
	Denver University	Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning	www.du.edu/ccesl/publicwork.html
	Portland State University	Center for Academic Excellence	www.pdx.edu/cae

The three students involved in the Weed and Seed project worked many long hours talking to citizens about crime and safety issues in their neighborhoods to identify specific problems and possible solutions. One student, who was a police officer in the city, said that this was an “eye-opening experience because I have never worked with citizens to solve crime problems in a collaborative way. It was really rewarding to be so engaged in the local community.”

Another student, who had little experience working in the public sector, stated, “This was a life-changing experience because it showed me what a difference a person can make in the lives of individuals. I loved this experience and think all students should have to do community service.”

Service-learning within colleges and universities can include short-term activities and single events, as well as specific stand-alone courses on service-learning, civic engagement, and service-centered courses within any

academic discipline. Service-centered courses are designed to assist students in reflecting on and learning from the service in which they are engaged.

Service-based courses often have broad liberal education objectives, such as civic or social consciousness, collaborative problem solving, and diversity awareness. Content- or curriculum-based service-learning courses integrate service to achieve preexisting course outcomes. These courses can be found in any academic discipline and in both undergraduate and graduate programs. Table 1 details the different types of service learning programs at colleges and universities.

At their best, service-learning experiences are reciprocally beneficial for the community and students. Service can be a way of making student learning real and concrete, as well as generating a long-term positive effect on an agency or a community.

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