Service-Learning Course Design Worksheet

Course Name/Number:

Semester:

The following worksheet provides a step-by step guide and suggestions to assist in the design of a service-learning course from scratch or revise a current course. What follows is an outline of these steps, along with a few questions to answer along the way.

At CSU Channel Islands, service-learning is defined as:

Service-learning is a high-impact teaching practice in which meaningful service addresses a critical societal and/or social justice issue and is a critical component of course curriculum and assessment of student learning. It is characterized by critical reflection and a collaborative partnership among faculty, students, and community, with a focus on both student learning and community impact.

High-quality service-learning consists of six essential elements:

- ❑ Reciprocal Partnership(s)
- ❑ Student Community Involvement Benefits the Common Good
- ❑ Academically Relevant Community Involvement
- ❑ Civic Learning Goals
- ❑ Critical Reflection
- ❑ Assessment of Learning

STEP 1. Course Learning Outcomes – Consider how service-learning will help students achieve the desired learning outcomes.

- ❑ Identify the desired learning outcomes for the course?
- ❑ What desired learning outcomes are best achieved through service-learning? Why?
- ❑ What are preferred modalities to address the desired learning outcomes (e.g., research papers, lecture, problem-based learning, class discussions).

STEP 2. Service and Civic Outcomes: Determine how the combination of service and academic content will enable students to achieve the learning outcomes. The service should be relevant to the community and to the content of the academic course, meaningful to the community and to the students, and developed and formulated with the community partner. From the outset of the project, faculty and community partners must have a clear sense of: 1) what is to be accomplished, and 2) what is to be learned. These goals should reflect the creative input of both those providing the service and those receiving it. Attention to this important factor of mutuality in the service-learning exchange can help keep the "service" from becoming charity. NOTE: For examples of learning objective paired with service objectives see http://www.loyno.edu/engage/service-learning-examples

- ❑ What do you want students to learn as a result of their service?
- ❑ Are there specific social issues or populations with whom you would like students to engage?
- ❑ What community needs might be impacted by the students in this class?
- ❑ What types of service activities support or are appropriate for the learning outcomes?
- ❑ What is appropriate for the students' skill levels, experiences, knowledge of the community and issue/need?

Type of Service – Will students work in groups, individually, or both

- ❑ Individual
- ❑ Group
- ❑ Hybrid of team and individual
- ❑ Will students complete a certain number of hours?
- ❑ Or will the service be project-based? (this may be determined once you meet with community partners to develop service-learning projects)

Type of project be:

- ❑ Direct: students go to a community site and work directly with clients at the site. Examples include tutoring or preparing taxes for Veterans.
- ❑ Indirect: the service activity occurs onsite but there is no direct contact with the organizations clients. Examples include monitoring water for Ventura Coastkeepers, developing a website or a publicity campaign for a nonprofit organization.

❑ Advocacy: Efforts made by students result in eventual changes in the social, political or environmental conditions contributing to community needs.

❑ Research: Community Based Research

STEP 3. Reciprocal Community Partnerships: The CCE focuses on an equity-based partnership model to cultivate deeply rooted community partnerships with over 80 (and growing) mainly non-profit organizations in the Ventura and Santa Barbara counties. The CSUCI SERVES database profiles university-approved partners who serve as co-educators and play an integral role in the service-learning process. It is our partners who share their community knowledge and expertise, so students are able:

• connect and contribute to the community
• learn about the larger political and social structures within their community
• develop civic responsibility and strong leadership skills
• examine and challenge their value and belief systems
 • build professional networks

Community partners are integral to the success of your service-learning students. So, it is important to organize the service-learning project(s) in collaboration with the partner and may include: meeting with community organizations, discussing their needs, assets, challenges, goals, and what opportunities are available in their organizations that can be incorporated into a service-learning curriculum.

❑ Which organization(s) will you partner with (see CSUCI SERVES) to develop a service-learning project(s) to support the service outcomes?

❑ When meeting with community partners, you and community partners may want to use the following resource: Guiding Questions for Partnership Meetings

❑ We invite you to contact the CCE to assist with setting up these meetings

STEP 4. Preparation/Preservice: Preparing students to fully engage in service-learning pedagogy, which is often new to them, can help in providing high-quality service that is of genuine benefit to the community. Preparation activities are most effective when they occur in both the classroom and in the community.

❑ How will students be prepared for entering and serving in the community? How will community partners be involved in the preparation? How will you help students develop/support skills or behaviors important to the service? This could involve an introduction to the community/geographic area, to the community partner, and to the work that the students will undertake. But beyond such introductory efforts, what preparation is needed?

❑ How will you deepen students understanding of the specific community interest/problem or public concern that they are engaged in?

❑ What readings, videos, websites, tools, etc. would be helpful to prepare students to serve effectively, inclusively, and respectfully in the community?

❑ Page 14 of the Service-Learning Faculty Guidebook can provide more information on preparing students for service.

STEP 5: Reflection/Critical Analysis: The service experience alone does not ensure that either significant learning or effective service will occur. Reflection provides structure for students to derive meaning and knowledge from their service experience; allowing them to connect this new knowledge to their classroom learning. Through discussions with others and individual reflections, students can develop a better sense of social responsibility, advocacy, and active citizenship. This reflective component allows for intellectual growth and development of skills in critical thinking. It is most useful when it is intentional and continuous throughout the experience and semester, and when opportunity for feedback is provided.

- ❑ What ongoing (**pre/mid and post semester**) reflection techniques will you use? (i.e. readings, writing assignments, journals, class discussions, guest speakers, videos, student evaluations, etc.).
- ❑ How will community partners be included in the reflection piece
- ❑ You will find reflection resources on the CCE webpage under the faculty tab and then Service-Learning Toolkit button.

STEP 6: Assessment: Built into the initial design of the service-learning project, assessment is essential so the impact on community, students, and faculty can be measured and reevaluated (with the community partner) for the remainder of the present, and for the next, semester.

- ❑ How will you evaluate or assess the service-learning component and/or product?
  - o Demonstration of Skill
  - o Site Supervisor Evaluation
  - o Assessment of Product(s)
  - o Assessment of Written Work
  - o Personal Interview
  - o Normal Course Assessment
  - o Oral Presentation
  - o A Combination
  - o Others
- ❑ How will students demonstrate their competence in the discipline and a deeper understanding of course content?
- ❑ At what points will you assess learning?
- ❑ What will be the community organization's role in evaluating students' performance at the service site?
- ❑ How will you and the community partner assess the partnership and identify future strategies for improvement?
- ❑ Will there be an end of the year meeting between you and the community partner(s)?

STEP 7. Service-Learning syllabus – Putting it all together!
Prepare a syllabus detailing rationale for service-learning, students' roles and responsibilities, how the service experience will be assessed, readings, course materials, and reflection activities. Objectives should be explicit in showing students how to relate service experiences and academic course content. Without such direction, many students may not make the connection at all, some will see the connection vaguely, and only a few will see the connection clearly. The CCE webpage provides resources for including service-learning in your syllabus. Be sure to share your syllabus with the community partner.

We suggest including the following elements:

- ❑ _____ Service-learning as an expressed goal
- ❑ _____ A clear description of how service-learning will be measured
- ❑ _____ A description of service-learning placements and/or projects
- ❑ _____ Student responsibilities (e.g., # of hours; timeline; due dates)
- ❑ _____ A match between needs of the community and the needs of your course
- ❑ _____ Course assignments that link the service and course content
- ❑ _____ A description of the reflective process (e.g., journals, discussion, presentations)