

INTRODUCTION TO SERVICE-LEARNING & COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Compiled and edited by
Randy Wallar

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Morgridge Center for Public Service
Red Gym, Room 154
716 Langdon St., Madison, WI
53706
Phone: 263-2432
morgridge@union.wisc.edu
www.morgridge.wisc.edu

Introduction

In recent years, service-learning (s-l) & community-based research (cbr) have become increasingly popular pedagogies on university campuses. These pedagogies manage to address the needs of three groups simultaneously: They provide community organizations/schools with the support and resources to address community issues; engage students with their coursework in relevant and meaningful ways which yield higher levels of civic engagement; and provide professors with the opportunities to apply their research to community-identified problems, and to teach courses which have the potential to transform their students' lives.

As part of our endeavor to educate the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus and the Madison community about the concepts of s-l and cbr, the Morgridge Center has put together this brochure, which briefly introduces these concepts, the types of s-l/cbr which take place at the university, the key principles to successful s-l/cbr, the benefits of these pedagogies, and the various resources available to you if you are interested in learning more.

I hope that this brief introduction sparks an interest for you, and encourages you to contact the Morgridge Center with your questions and ideas for possible service-learning and community-based research projects.

Sincerely,

Michael Thornton, Professor of Afro-American Studies
Faculty Director of the Morgridge Center for Public Service
Room 154, Red Gym
716 Langdon Street
Madison, WI 53706
(608) 263-2432
www.morgridge.wisc.edu

Forms of Community Involvement

Experience/ Method	Focus of Effort	Time Commitment	Supervised by/ Graded By	% of Grade Involved
Volunteerism /Community Service	Volunteer services; meeting identified agency or community needs; any work may be done, as long as it helps someone.	Varies according to desires of volunteer and needs of agency.	Supervised by agency personnel, no grade given	None
Service- Learning/ Community Based Reserach	Both service and learning; meeting community needs while focusing on goals for learning in the course.	Averages about 2-3 hrs. per week based on agency/school needs.	Supervised by agency personnel; graded by professor based on a tangible demonstration of learning submitted by service learner (e.g., paper, oral presentation or portfolio).	Varies according to desires of professor
Fieldwork/ Clinical Placements	Learning; practicing skills for a profession, usually in helping fields such as nursing and social work.	Varies according to a discipline (e.g., 16-20 hrs/wk for Social Work); almost always more hrs/wk than service-learning.	Supervised and graded by UW-Madison clinical staff.	Usually clinical work plus some academic work and/or research equals 100%
Internships	Learning; practicing skills for future work, e.g., public relations, counseling psychology.	Varies according to department; usually at least 20 hrs/wk.	Supervised by agency personnel; graded by supervising professor.	100%

Adapted from *Service-Learning at Marquette Faculty Handbook* (1998)

Definition of Service-Learning:

“Service-learning is a credit bearing, educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility.”

Robert Bringle & Julie Hatcher, “A Service-Learning Curriculum for Faculty”

The Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning
Fall 1995, pages 112-122

Three Criteria for Academic Service-Learning

- 1) Relevant and Meaningful Service With the Community** — service provided in the community must be both relevant and meaningful to all stakeholders. There is purposeful collaboration between the University and the community, and the community plays an active role in defining what the students’ service activities will be.
- 2) Enhanced Academic Learning** — the addition of relevant and meaningful service with the community must not only serve the community but also enhance student academic learning in the course. The service and academic goals must inform and transform one another.
- 3) Purposeful Civic Learning** — the addition of relevant and meaningful service in and to the community not only serves the community and enhances student academic learning, but also prepares students for active civic participation in a diverse democratic society.

Adapted from Service-Learning Course Design Workbook
Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning

Summer 2001

Morgridge Center Perspective on Service-Learning

The roots of the service-learning movement can be traced back to John Dewey, an early 1900's advocate for experiential education. Over the past two decades it has emerged as a highly effective teaching method within higher education. Today, service-learning is embraced by hundreds of colleges and universities. The Morgridge Center believes:

Service-learning is an effective teaching pedagogy:

1. It extends the classroom into the community, be it local, regional, national, or international.
2. It integrates service with learning.
3. The service experience is as integral to the course as class lectures, required readings, and library research.
4. Academic credit is for **learning**, not for service.

High quality service-learning characteristics include:

1. High academic rigor.
2. Meaningful and relevant service.
3. Active student engagement.
4. Powerful **reflection** that integrates service and learning.

Core elements of service-learning include:

1. A meaningful out-of-class learning experience directly related to course content.
2. An opportunity for students to test and apply knowledge and skills, as well as generate more questions.
3. Use of purposeful **reflection**.
4. **Partnership** among students, faculty, and community organizations.
5. Service is intentional.

Research on service-learning shows:

1. Positive impact on academic learning.
2. Positive effect on interpersonal development and the ability to work well with others, leadership and communication skills.
3. Positive effect on reducing stereotypes and facilitating cultural and racial understanding.
4. Positive impact on the development of critical thinking skills.

Principles of Good Practice for Service-Learning Pedagogy

Taken from the original: Howard, J. (1993). "Community Service Learning in the Curriculum." In J. Howard (Ed.), Praxis I: A faculty casebook on community service learning (pp 3-12). Ann Arbor: OCSL Press.

Principle 1: Academic Credit is for Learning, Not for Service

Principle 2: Do Not Compromise Academic Rigor

Principle 3: Establish Learning Objectives

Principle 4: Establish Criteria for the Selection of Service-Learning Placements

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

Principle 6: Prepare Students for Learning from the Community

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

Principle 8: Rethink the Faculty Instructional Role

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

Principle 10: Maximize the Community Responsibility Orientation of the Course

Service-Learning Course Models

Individual Placement

Optional: Students choose service experience as a partial fulfillment of course credits. Those students not electing the service-learning option fulfill an alternate course learning activity

Required: Similar to the optional placement model, except that service is required of all students.

- **Service Project:** Students may select service sites from a list of opportunities offered by the course instructor. Some instructors work with multiple sites, some work with only one.
- **Hours:** Typically, students complete 25 hours of service work over the course of the semester.
- **Example:** Horticulture 120 (Survey of Horticulture): Students are placed in various organizations around Madison doing such projects as planting, weeding, and seed collection. These tasks give the students firsthand knowledge of the plants they study in class.

Group Project/Consulting/Research

The Group Project Model engages a small class group or an entire class in a community project. Typically, these are advanced level courses where service-learners apply technical expertise to community needs or problems.

- **Service Project:** Students work in teams or as an entire class to produce a product or provide technical consultation to a community organization or school.
- **Hours:** There may be no time requirement. Rather, the product is a major outcome. A small portion of time is spent on site; the remaining time is spent working as a group toward the product.
- **Example:** InterEgr 160, Introduction to Design. This course introduces students to basic engineering principles, allows them to explore different engineering disciplines and introduces them to problem solving through a design project. Groups of students work with a community partner to design a project that will meet a technical need of the organization.

Partnership

Various arrangements exist for the Partnership model. They can range from, **A)** learning in a seminar format with the service project as the main content area, to, **B)** a relationship formed between a professor and an organization, where all of the students in a class devote their services to the same cause, issue or problems.

- **Service Project: A)** In this format, the Partnership model consists of students and faculty collaborating with community or school representatives on the project goals and objectives. Typically, the project is not subject to the semester format,

B) This model is similar to the Group Project model, but differs in that the service is not generally done as a group, and the service is done on-site.

- **Hours:** The time commitment in this model is variable, depending on the demands and format of the partnership.
- **Example:** WIF (Wisconsin Idea Undergraduate Fellowships): This program enables students to work with faculty, instructional staff, and community organizations on an issue. The activities and results benefit all those involved.

Independent/Directed Study

An individual student, in conjunction with a faculty advisor, carries out this model. The student selects a community issue or need, and conducts a project in which they attempt to find solutions to this problem. This is not an established course, but rather an individual project, which the students and faculty plan and execute.

- **Service Project:** There is a wide range of possibilities for service projects in this category, as the individual student invents the project.
- **Hours:** Due to the nature of this model, the time commitment is also variable, and is most likely determined by the faculty advisor.
- **Example:** Zoology 699 (Directed Study): This course allows students to receive credit for working in a lab or doing service-learning with an ecological organization. The students work with a professor as well as a project supervisor. In this course, the rule is that each academic credits equals 3 hours per week spent on the project.

Service-Learning Internship

Students attend a class, as well as working for a significant amount of time each week in a community organization. The internship component is essential to the understanding of the rest of the course material.

- **Service Project:** The service-learning internship is intended to give students a broad view of issues that are salient within their field. Together with the coursework, the internship provides the student with an experience which helps prepare them for work in that field.
- **Hours:** There is not a fixed or uniform time commitment for the service-learning internship. It varies from internship to internship.
- **Example:** Women's Studies 660: This internship program is designed to provide students with opportunities for learning and working in

organizations in ways that connect their course work in Women's Studies to specific issues in community settings. This course consists of 2 hours per week in class, and an additional 10-12 hours of work per week spent at the internship.

Definition of Community-Based Research:

Paralleling the growing recognition of service-learning as an effective teaching and learning methodology has been the emergence of community-based research (cbr) as a more comprehensive and participatory approach to research. Community-based research, also known as participatory research, action research, participatory action research and community-based participatory research, is a particular research model *found under the umbrella of service-learning* in which community organizations, community members, activists and civic leaders join forces with academic researchers (faculty, academic staff and students) to produce knowledge that is used for the benefit of the community. In contrast to earlier community research practices in which community members were simply "human subjects" and passive recipients of information, community-based research values the local community's perspectives and seeks active engagement from all facets of the community at each phase of the research process.

*Taken from University-Community Research Partnerships Initiative
Edward Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning
University of Michigan*

Principles of Good Practice for Community-Based Research

While every university-community partnership will be unique, there are certain steps that partners can take to ensure that the research partnership yields positive results for all parties involved. The following characteristics were identified by Barbara Israel of the university of Michigan School of Public Health as critical elements of successful university-community partnerships:

- 1. Recognize community as a unit of identity.**
- 2. Builds on strengths and resources within the community.**
- 3. Responds to needs identified by the community itself.**
- 4. Facilitates collaborative, equitable involvement of all partners in all phases of the research.**

- 5. Integrates knowledge and intervention for mutual benefits of all partners.**
- 6. Promotes a co-learning and empowering process that attends to social inequalities.**
- 7. Involves a cyclical and iterative process.**
- 8. Disseminates findings and knowledge gained to all partners.**
- 9. Involves a long-term commitment by all partners.**

Benefits of Service-Learning and Community-Based Research

UW-Madison Emeritus Professor Mona Wasow, who taught service-learning courses in the School of Social Work for 30 years, describes service-learning as a "Four Way Win":

For Community Agencies

- Supports the work of agencies which are often understaffed and under-budgeted by providing resources and time given by students, faculty, and staff.
- More consistency and sustainability during the semester and semesters to follow if the course is repeated.
- Creates new alliances and partnerships with the University; demystifies a large and complex institution.
- Creates opportunities to learn about the latest research in their areas and work to test that research.
- Creates opportunities to ask for more research on practical questions for staff and clients.
- Infuses agencies with the excitement, enthusiasm, and energy of young college students, as well as older and more students who can "hit the ground running" based on their previous educational and employment history.
- Garners wider support for the work that agencies do.

- Allows agencies to work with students and decide whether there are some future recruits among them.
- Fosters connections across generations.
- Instills a lifelong commitment to service in students.

For Clients

- Provides clients with direct or indirect services which might not otherwise be available to them.
- Gives clients the opportunity to teach students about the many aspects of their lives.
- Clients can provide direct feedback about the services and the research being done in the agencies.

For Students

- Academic content of course comes to life through the practical application of learning in the community.
- Strengthens their understanding of course material.
- Improves critical thinking skills and recognition of the complexity of problems.
- Requires students to assume more responsibility for their learning.
- Introduces students to current societal issues.
- Broadens students' perspectives by connecting them with the larger world.
- Increases the value placed on public service.
- Helps them understand the difference between assisting an individual and becoming involved in public policy to foster change.
- Increases their multicultural fluency and understanding of differences between socio-economic classes.
- Aids students in making an impact on the community where they live.

For Faculty and Staff

- Strengthens and renews teachers because students are more engaged in learning.

- Serve as a catalyst for faculty to review their teaching methodologies and experiment with the progressive pedagogy of service-learning and community-based research. (Community agencies and clients will challenge them.)
- Extends the classroom into community for the development of mutually-beneficial knowledge, such as new community-based research projects which test current theories and practices.
- Demonstrates faculty commitment to the community by awarding academic credit for research and service directly related to course content.
- Increases opportunities for professional recognition and rewards.
- Provides opportunities for faculty to introduce the latest research to the community, i.e. the Scholarship of Engagement.
- Places faculty in alignment with the institutional mission derived in part from the Wisconsin Idea (see Chancellor Wiley's "Connecting Ideas: Strategies for the University of Wisconsin-Madison" booklet published in 2001, especially Section II, Advance Learning on p. 6-8, and Section IV, Amplify the Wisconsin Idea, p. 10).

Morgridge Center for Public Service Resources

The Morgridge Center is the first stop for faculty, staff, and students in search of information on service-learning and community-based research, practical guides to designing and implementing courses and projects, ideas for service and/or research projects, contact information for community agencies, and a range of other resources:

1. **The Service-Learning Resource Center** is a library of resources that contains sample service-learning/community-based research syllabi from UW-Madison as well as other universities; guides, texts and journals relating to service-learning and community-based research; and sample service-learning contracts, evaluations, and other forms. Visit <http://morgridge.wisc.edu/faculty/resources.html>

2. **Service-Learning Course Development Grants:** The Morgridge Center provides an individual faculty/instructional academic staff member with up to \$1,500 for development, implementation, and evaluation of a new service-learning course or the integration of a service-learning component into an existing course.

3. **In partnership with the** United Way of Dane County, Madison Area Technical College Volunteer Center, Edgewood College and RSVP, the Morgridge Center maintains **VolunteerYourTime.org**, a web-based volunteer data-base listing approximately 300 community organizations and their volunteer needs (semester-long, year-long, one-time only, group).

The Morgridge Center also works with Community Shares of Wisconsin to promote advocacy and social justice issues. Visit www.communityshares.com for a list of their member organizations.

The Morgridge Center sponsors a Volunteer Fair each semester, with over 70 campus and community organizations participating.

4. **Staff and Faculty Consultation Support & Training:** Center staff and faculty mentors are available for individual consultation/training around s-l and cbr; group workshops and trainings are also provided.

5. **Service-Learning Fellows:** Trained Junior or Senior students are available to provide logistical support to professors/instructional academic staff who are developing or implementing s-l/cbr classes. Assignments range from semester to year long

6. **Volunteer Transportation Program:** To better facilitate the transportation for service-learning/community-based research students and volunteers to sites on the outskirts of Madison as well as in Middleton, Monona, and Fitchburg, the Morgridge Center has contracted with Union Cab to transport students that are **providing regular service or research throughout a semester to sites located beyond a Madison Metro Transfer Point**. For specifics regarding this service please see:<http://morgridge.wisc.edu/students/transportation.html>

7. **Wisconsin Idea Undergraduate Fellowship (WIF):** These fellowships support special projects where students, faculty and instructional staff, and community organizations collaborate in activities designed to benefit all of the participants. Students with at least sophomore standing submit a project proposal that focuses on a need identified by the community. Project areas include (but are not limited to) the arts, community development, criminal justice, economic development, environmental issues, hunger and poverty alleviation, etc. A stipend is provided to students; the faculty mentor and community partner also receive up to \$1,000 to support implementation of the projects. For more information go to <http://morgridge.wisc.edu/students/wif.html>

For more information on service-learning and community-based research at UW-Madison, please visit <http://morgridge.wisc.edu/faculty.html>. Additionally, MCPS staff are available to meet with students, faculty/instructional staff and community agency/school representatives to further discuss implementation strategy for service-learning. Please email morgridge@union.wisc.edu or call 263-2432 for an appointment.

Web Resources

Campus Compact

www.compact.org

Resources for service-learning practitioners. Includes extensive links to web resources, job listings, news, model programs, sample syllabi, and more.

Wisconsin Campus Compact

www.wicampuscompact.uwp.edu

Wisconsin's statewide campus compact organization, of which UW-Madison is a founding member.

The Big Dummy's Guide to Service-Learning

www.fiu.edu/~time4chg/Library/bigdummy.html

Frequently asked questions about service-learning answered.

The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse

www.servicelearning.org/

A searchable database of K-12 and higher education service-learning literature.

Learn and Serve America

www.learnandserve.org/

Includes information about Learn & Serve American program and resources.

Community-Campus Partnerships for Health

<http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/>

The Journal of Higher Education Outreach & Engagement

www.uga.edu/he/jheoe.html

Michigan Journal of Community Service-Learning

www.umich.edu/~mjcs/

Journal of Community Engagement and Scholarship

www.jces.ua.edu/

Recommended Readings

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Morgridge Center Staff

Michael Thornton, Faculty Director
608 263-2432
mthornton@wisc.edu

Kathy Cramer Walsh, Faculty Research Scholar
608-265-3679
kwalsh2@wisc.edu

Randy Wallar, Associate Director
608 262-5781
jrwallar@wisc.edu

Anne Whisner, Community Service Coordinator
608 262-8446
whisner@wisc.edu

Emily Villhauer, Program Advisor
608 252-0803
villhauer@wisc.edu

Debi Hegerfeld, Administrative Assistant
608 263-2432 • (fax) 608 252-0542

morgridge@union.wisc.edu
www.morgridge.wisc.edu

Campus Community Partnerships Office
Villager Center
2300 S. Park St., Suite 1
Madison, WI 53713
608 260-2674 • (fax) 260-8133
ccp@union.wisc.edu