

Service Learning

Metropolitan State University of Denver

Service Learning

“Service-learning 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.”

Seifer & Connors (2007)

Key Features of Service-Learning

In service learning, academic credit is for *learning*, not for service.

- Service learning course objectives are linked to real community needs (designed in cooperation with community partners and service recipients).
- Service learning engages students in a three-part process:
 - **classroom preparation** through explanation and analysis of theories and ideas;
 - **meaningful service activity** that emerges from and informs classroom context; and
 - **structured reflection** tying service experience back to specific learning goals.

Benefits to Participants

Students



Faculty



Community



University



Benefits to Students



- Students benefit from service learning through:
 - Hands-on application that increases the relevance of academic knowledge.
 - Accommodation of different learning styles.
 - Practical career preparation.
 - Interaction with people of diverse cultures and lifestyles.
 - An increased sense of efficacy and social development.
 - Meaningful involvement in the local community.
 - Moral and ethical growth.
- Source: CSU Service-Learning website

Benefits to Faculty



- Instructors benefit from service learning through:
 - An enhanced teaching repertoire.
 - Increased contact with students
 - New perspectives on learning and increased understanding of how learning occurs.
 - Increased awareness of community issues and their relationship to instructors' academic interests.
 - Identification of current trends and issues that might inform research.
 - Potential for interdisciplinary collaboration.
 - Contribution to tenure and other review files.

Benefits to Community



- The community benefits from service learning through:
 - Increased awareness of and ability to articulate community issues.
 - Short and long term solutions to community problems.
 - Access to campus resources.
 - Relationship opportunities with academic institutions.
 - Opportunities to contribute to the educational process.
 - Opportunities to foster future active community members.

Benefits to University



- Academic institutions benefit from service learning through:
 - Enhanced teaching, research, and outreach activities.
 - Faculty and student engagement in local and state issues.
 - Opportunities to extend campus resources.
 - Positive community relationships.
 - Increased preparation of graduates.

Service Learning Responsibilities

Students



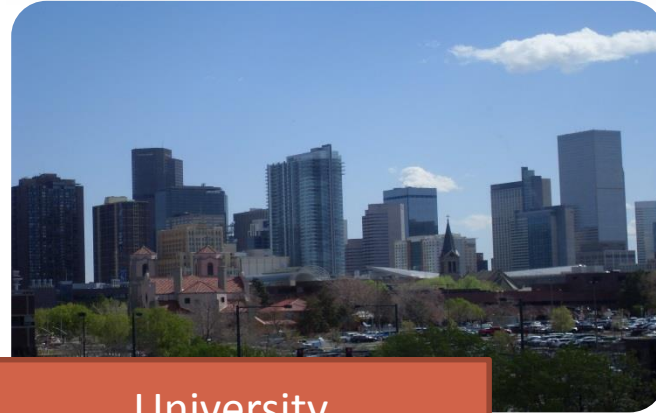
Faculty



Community



University



Faculty Role in Service Learning

- Before the semester:
 - Think about *your* objectives for the students
 - Initiate service learning relationship with community partners.
 - Create a well-articulated syllabus.
 - Inform students of the service learning course component and their required commitment.
 - Consider SL designation.



Faculty Role in Service Learning

- During the semester:
 - Provide a commitment form for students .
 - Communicate with the community placement site and monitor student performance.
 - Provide reflection discussion and journal activities.
 - Consider attending on-campus workshops or meet-ups.

Adapted from: CSU Service Learning website



Students' Role in Service Learning

- Students are expected to:
 - Obtain a placement and arrange hours by class deadline.
 - Honor their commitment to the service site by being prompt, conscientious, and respectful.
 - Fulfill agreed upon duties and responsibilities.
 - Learn about diverse cultures and communities.
 - Maintain respect and confidentiality for partners they serve.
 - Address concerns or problems that arise with site supervisors.
 - Reflect on the service learning experience in journal entries and class discussions.
 - Participate in the course evaluation process.

Adapted from: CSU Service Learning website



Community Partners' Role in Service Learning

- Community partners are expected to:
 - Consider suitable partnership objectives
 - Orient students to the organization's mission and goals.
 - Train, supervise, and give feedback.
 - Provide meaningful work that has learning value for the students.
 - Provide a safe work environment and reasonable hours.

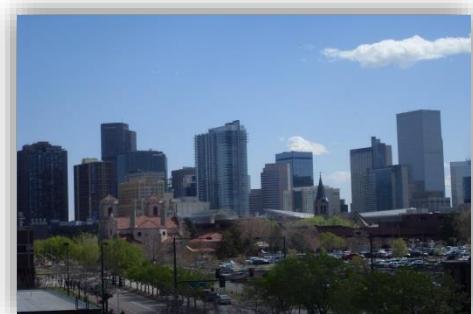
Adapted from: CSU Service Learning website



Service Learning Office's Role in Service Learning

- The Service Learning office can assist you with:
 - Resources and consultation geared to your course.
 - Suggestions for appropriate community partners.
 - Connections to experienced service learning faculty.
 - Receiving recognition for service learning and civic engagement.

Adapted from: CSU Service Learning website



Conclusion

Service learning encourages collaboration between students, faculty, and the community to benefit the community while fostering academic growth and civic-mindedness.



Sources & Resources

Sources

- [Colorado State University Service Learning site](#)
- Jeavons, T. H. (1995). Service-Learning and Liberal Learning: A Marriage of Convenience." *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*. Fall: 134-140.
- Seifer, S. D., & Connors K., (Eds.) (2007). Community Campus Partnerships for Health. *Faculty Toolkit for Service-Learning in Higher Education*. Scotts Valley, CA: National Service-Learning Clearinghouse.

Resources

- www.msudenver.edu/service-learning
- Sharepoint: Service Learning at MSU Denver

Contact Information



For more information and additional resources, contact:

Lori McKinney, PhD

Service Learning Specialist

lmckinn9@msudenver.edu

Graham Ignizio, PhD

Faculty Associate for Service Learning

gignizio@msudenver.edu

Applied Learning Center

Administration Building, Suite 325

303-615-1333

www.msudenver.edu/service-learning

Thank you!