



An Evolving Service-Learning Model of Critical Engagement for the Assessment-Phobic: Striving towards Meaningful Growth of Pedagogy and Program

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Challenges and Gifts of Service-Learning Assessment

- S-L aims to transform
- S-L crosses disciplinary boundaries
- S-L is human-centered

Challenges/Gifts cont. . .

- Cooperation
- Logistics
- Critical engagement
- Bi-products of interconnectedness

Dominican Service-Learning Five Criteria for Course Designation

Academic Connection: Service is related to curriculum and fully integrated into course goals, student learning outcomes. Participation is required.

- The service-learning component of the course is directly linked to the academic goals of the course; each informs and transforms the other.
- Goals of the service-learning component are clearly articulated in terms of the broader course goals.

Five Criteria Continued...

Community Voice and Quality Service: The service project/placement engages and fulfills community identified needs as well as meeting course objectives. This includes determining a timeframe, required skill-set for students, training requirements etc.

- The service component responds to the needs of the community as defined by the community.
- Goals are developed in the context of community needs, but with a focus on the *assets/ capacities* of all partners (students, community partners, faculty members, etc.).
- Students are prepared for entrance into the community through an introduction to the agency/issue and appropriate training.

Five Criteria Continued...

Reciprocity/Collaboration: "Reciprocity suggests that every individual, organization, and entity involved in the service-learning functions as a both teacher and a learner." (B. Jacoby, *Service-Learning in Higher Education*, 1996)

- Partners in the process develop a shared vision and joint strategies.
- Partners learn from and teach each other on an on-going basis.

Five Criteria Continued...

Reflection: A mechanism that encourages students to link their service experience to course content and to process their personal experience/perceptions. "The hyphen in service-learning represents the reflection that bridges service to learning and learning to service."

- Formal and informal reflection is conducted before, during and after the service.
- Social, psychological, political and ethical considerations are made while reflecting on the service experience.

Five Criteria Continued...

Assessment: A method/tool embedded in the course for understanding effectiveness of service-learning for all participants: faculty, students, and community partners.

- Evaluation seeks to measure the progress towards and outcomes of both the learning and service goals of the course.
- Assignment that demonstrates that student capacity to link academic knowledge to practice.

Assessment

- Deciding what we thought was "measurable"...
- Service-Learning SLO:



Student will demonstrate ability to:
Apply theory to practice and practice to theory.

Assessment Tool

Course Embedded Assignment:

- Write a 4-6 page essay that reflects on your service-learning experience and refers to at least *three course texts or readings*. Use direct quotes to explore which text/viewpoint became most relevant in your work. * Which academic concepts were illuminated by your work with community partners? Be specific and use evidence from both the academic and the practice that shaped your learning.

**Please adapt as relevant to your course materials.*

Developing a Rubric



Service-Learning SLO Assessment Rubric

Criteria	4	3	2	1	Points
Awareness of Purpose of Service-Learning	Student demonstrates awareness of purpose of SL as a means to become actively engaged in social responsibility. Active dialogue beyond course material, furthering their understanding of the rights & responsibilities of living in a democratic society.	Student expresses awareness of how SL is an intentional means to further understanding and awareness of core societal issues and become actively engaged but doesn't completely make connections beyond course material.	Student expresses awareness of how SL is integral to course and understanding of the relevance of their personal engagement.	Student demonstrates limited awareness of the purpose of service-learning in the course.	
Application of Theory to Practice & Practice to Theory	Student develops own original perspective based on both theory & service. Compelling evidence from both course materials & service appear often and develop the author's thesis well.	Student develops a perspective based on both theory & service. Appropriately detailed evidence and explanation appear in most paragraphs, although he/she may require more interpretation/detail and clearer connections.	Student expresses some connection but little interpretation or framing. Evidence and explanation appear in some paragraphs but the evidence may be overly general or the explanation assumptive.	Student does not apply theory, or there is a limited, weaker connection of theory/ideas to service. Evidence and explanation do not appear, or they are random and unrelated to the thesis.	
Critical Thinking	Student explicitly states how personal assumptions have changed, and how new connections regarding complexity of societal issues have emerged.	Student states and begins to question original personal assumptions based on theory & service. Begins to delve deeper into larger core issues but without making connections regarding complexity of societal issues.	Student asks questions and tries to see and respond from different perspectives using evidence/insights but original perspective has not been enhanced or expanded.	Student accepts ideas and observations at face value. Opinions are stated without argument or support. Fails to identify issues and stakeholders.	
Thesis, Overall Structure, Content, Mechanics & Writing Style	Thesis provides writer's clearly defined purpose. Structure and content present a clear sense of beginning, middle, and end. Transitions distinctive and clear. Grammar, spelling, mechanics, and punctuation are practically flawless. Sources are cited expertly, using the appropriate style.	Thesis describes writer's purpose but lacks depth of detail. Structure and content present a clear sense of beginning, middle, and end. Transitions generally connect but may be unclear. Grammar, spelling, mechanics, and punctuation are practically flawless, and if errors occur, they do not confuse meaning. Sources are cited appropriately.	Thesis makes a point, but unconnected to purpose. Structure and content present an imperfect sense of beginning, middle, and end. Transitions awkward. Grammar, spelling, mechanics, and punctuation contain regular, patterned errors, suggesting poor proof reading or under-developed writing skills. Sources are not cited consistently.	No thesis statement. Structure and content present an incoherent sense of beginning, middle, and end. Transitions confusing if at all. Grammar, spelling, mechanics, and punctuation render the paper incoherent, suggesting poor proof reading and under-developed writing skills. Sources are not cited.	Total Points

Service-Learning Assessment Rubric...

Awareness of Purpose of Service-Learning

■ Student demonstrates awareness of purpose of SL as a means to become actively engaged in social responsibility & civic dialogue beyond course material, furthering their understanding of the rights & responsibilities of living in a democratic society.

Service-Learning Assessment Rubric...

Application of Theory to Practice & Practice to Theory

■ Student develops *own* original perspective based on both theory & service. Compelling evidence from both course materials & service appear often and develop the author's thesis well.

Service-Learning Assessment Rubric...

Critical Thinking

■ Student explicitly states how personal assumptions have changed, and how new connections regarding complexity of societal issues have emerged.

Service-Learning Assessment Rubric...

Thesis, Overall Structure, Content, Mechanics & Writing Style

■ **Thesis** provides writer's clearly defined purpose. **Structure** and content present a clear sense of beginning, middle, and end. **Transitions** distinctive and clear. **Grammar**, spelling, mechanics, and punctuation are practically flawless. **Sources** are cited expertly, using the appropriate style.

Instructions for Norming

- Review the rubric. Discuss terms used in rubric. Come to consensus on rubric terms. Hint: spend time on best case and worst case terminology (score of 4 and score of 1).
- Each person read and score an essay. Don't over think your scoring.
- Create a quick table responses from readers in your group.

Quick Response Table for Rubric Scores

	Awareness & Purpose	Theory to Practice, Practice to Theory	Critical Thinking	Thesis, Structure, Content
Reader 1	3	3	3	4
Reader 2	2	3	3	3
Reader 3	2	2	2	3
Reader 4				
Reader 5				
Reader 6				
Reader 7				

Aggregated Data – Year 1

Assessment Criteria	Average	% Success
Awareness of the Purpose of Service-Learning in the Course	3.20	80%
Application of Theory/Intellectual to Experiential/Service	3.46	87%
Critical/Reflective Thinking	3.51	88%
Overall Writing Structure and Organization	3.37	84%

Programmatic Changes & Improvements – Year 1

- Refinement/Clarification of rubric with faculty
- Created/Offered S-L orientation for all students enrolled in S-L courses
- Formal piloting of SL courses in process of applying for SL designation

Aggregated Data – Year 2

Assessment Criteria	Average	% Success
Awareness of the Purpose of Service-Learning in the Course	3.10	77%
Application of Theory/Intellectual to Experiential/Service	2.96	74%
Critical/Reflective Thinking	2.97	74%
Overall Writing Structure and Organization	2.82	71%

Programmatic Changes & Improvements – Year 2

- Improve norming process
- Refinement/additions to language in criteria for designation
- Proposal to implement voluntary peer observations
- Findings disseminated to all S-L faculty
- First formal S-L faculty meeting to discuss data, last year's improvements, and this year's recommendations
- Increased communication with community partners, greater participation proposed

Julia – Changes and Growth as Administrator

- Embracing “Unfinishedness” (P. Friere) or “as you progress you may regress” (A. Furco)
- Hold the bar higher and lower
- Quality/Quantity
- Dysfunction is what you don't make of it

Julia – Changes & Growth as Teacher

- Integration doesn't happen on its own
- Mess—good, disorganization—bad
- Pushing students isn't harassment
- Working w/against my own learning style

Thomas ~ Changes and Growth as Administrator

- Assessment-phobic to Assessment-philic
- Accountability & Relationship
- Responsibility without Authority

Thomas ~ Changes & Growth as Teacher

- Assessment-phobic to assessment-philic
- Negotiating my biases
- Less is sometimes more

How to Contact Us...

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Thank You!