

A Student Guide to Service-Learning

Hibbing Community College
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*****Please contact Jamie with questions or concerns
regarding your service-learning experience*****

HCC Service-Learning Mission Statement: *“Integrating theories of the classroom with community experiences to strengthen citizenship, enhance personal growth, and enrich the community.”*

“Everyone can be great because everyone can serve.”
Martin Luther King Jr.

What is Service-Learning?

Service-learning is a method of *experiential learning* that provides students with community-based learning opportunities, thus expanding the walls of the classroom beyond the college and into the community.

Service-learning provides:

- opportunities for students to use newly acquired academic skills and knowledge in real life situations, while helping to meet actual community needs through service.
- structured opportunities for students to think, talk, and write about what they experience at their service site.

Why am I getting credit for volunteering?

Your instructor is not giving you academic credit for the time you spend working with an organization; you are receiving credit for the learning connected to your experience in the community. Service-Learning is different from volunteering, as it has specific learning goals and objectives. Think of your experience as a text you are learning from, but instead of reading it, you are living it. Also unlike volunteering, service-learning requires a reflective component in which students relate their academic studies to the service experience.



BENEFITS OF SERVICE-LEARNING

Student Benefits:

- Provides opportunities to connect theory to practice and gain a deeper understanding of course topics
- Gives you a chance to work with a diverse range of people, cultures, and lifestyles
- Provides valuable career experiences and professional contacts; looks great on a resume
- Helps you examine your values, attitudes, and beliefs by engaging you in new environments and situations
- Sharpens creative problem-solving abilities, collaboration, and leadership skills

- Provides a personal sense of fulfillment and accomplishment
- 25 hours fulfills the Civic and Ethical Responsibility portion of the MN Transfer Curriculum
- 25 hours earns you a service-learning certificate

College Benefits:

- Enriches the curriculum
- Increases the number of students who are actively engaged in their education and the community
- Creates positive relationships with the community
- Demonstrates the college's commitment to citizen leadership and community service
- Generates opportunities for fiscal partnerships
- Improves community awareness of the college

Community Benefits:

- Provides new ideas, energy, and enthusiasm
- Gives the community access to college resources
- Increases public awareness of the agency's impact, programs, and services
- Increases the available volunteer pool
- Provides meaningful contributions for social action
- Assists students in becoming active citizens, contributors, problem-solvers, and partners
- Creates positive relationships with college staff, faculty, and students



STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Rights:

- To participate in a variety of productive and meaningful tasks
- To receive orientation, training, and ongoing supervision
- To refuse to participate in uncomfortable tasks or situations that you perceive as risky or unsafe
- To be given opportunities to pursue leadership roles
- To be evaluated and to receive letters of recommendation based on the quality of service

Responsibilities:

- To take your service seriously – approach it as a job; arrive on time and ready to work
- To respect and maintain confidentiality
- To notify your supervisor if you will be late or absent
- To maintain a positive attitude and keep things in perspective
- To represent Hibbing Community College in a positive manner

Ethics:

- Do not offer any client a ride in your personal vehicle
- Avoid one-on-one situations that place you alone with a client or isolate you from main areas
- Don't expose others (particularly elderly or children) to illness
- Children will look up to you, be careful about what you say and do while working with them
- Never make promises or commitments to people at the organization that neither you nor the organization can keep
- Report any incidents, real or perceived, which make you uncomfortable to the site supervisor and/or the Service-Learning Director
- Do not give your phone number or address to non-staff members you are working with in the community



REFLECTION

Reflection is an integral aspect of Service-Learning. It is the key ingredient for transforming service experiences into learning. It is the link between the service performed and classroom concepts. In order to maximize your learning experience, reflection should occur both in and out of the classroom.

Ways to reflect:

There are many ways to reflect upon your experience; some may be required as part of your coursework. Each instructor has different requirements, such as:

Journals-

Keeping a journal is an excellent way to reflect on your experience and learning. A journal entry should be made for each time you are at your site. If journaling is a requirement as part of your experience, a packet will be provided.

Reflective sessions-

These are scheduled as part of your class. This may be a group session or by individual students. It is a great opportunity to learn about what your classmates are experiencing and share your story.

On-line discussion boards-

Some courses conduct reflection via on-line communication.

Papers and projects-

Your instructor may ask you to reflect on your experience in a paper or final project. This is determined by the instructor.

As an individual, you can reflect by:

- Periodically reviewing your goals to assess how well you are meeting them.
- Discuss your experience with other service-learning participants and your instructor, site supervisor, or service-learning coordinator
- Help get others involved on campus. Talk to your peers and instructors about your experience

GETTING STARTED

Once you have read over the student guide and selected a potential site you are interested in working with, you may go ahead and contact the organization.

Your first phone call:

- Ask to speak with the contact person listed. If, for some reason, that person is not with the site any longer, ask to speak with the volunteer coordinator. Please inform us if you find that any contact information is incorrect.
- Identify yourself as a service-learning student from Hibbing Community College.
- Let them know why you are interested in working there for the semester.
- Let them know that you have ____ number of hours of service-learning to complete this semester.
- Ask if there is any special testing or training required before you can begin your service.

- Make sure you have your calendar available to set up an initial meeting time to receive an orientation to the site.
- Make sure you know where the organization is located.

Your first visit to the organization:

- Set up a work schedule for the semester and complete any paperwork required of the organization.
- Learn the organization's policies and procedures.
- Let your supervisor know when you have mid-terms, finals, or when you will be gone for breaks.
- Ask about the history and mission of the organization so you can put your work into context.

I READ AND I FORGET.

I SEE AND I REMEMBER.

I DO AND I UNDERSTAND.

CHINESE PROVERB

A STUDENT GUIDE TO CHOOSING A SERVICE-LEARNING SITE

Welcome to Service-Learning!!!!

This guide is intended to help you choose your Service-Learning site. Finding the right site for you and your needs can greatly enhance your Service-Learning experience. When considering a site, ask yourself the following questions:

1. What are my skills or interests?
2. What kind of setting am I comfortable working in?
-Small groups, one-on-one, etc...
3. What do I want to learn from my experience?
-Ex: new skills, job experience, etc...
4. Who do I most want to serve?
-Elderly, homeless, etc...
5. How much time do I have to give?
-How many hours each week?
6. Do I have adequate transportation?

The site supervisors listed on your contact sheet will be happy to answer any questions you may have and may even be able to assist you in tailoring a service-learning experience that will best suit your needs and abilities. You may also wish to inquire about any training or orientation programs that your site provides; some sites require training prior to service. (Please feel free to contact the service-learning coordinator to discuss service-learning opportunities, as well.)

Note: Many sites have special policies regarding the safety of their clientele (children, elderly, and vulnerable adults.) If there are unresolved issues in your background that prohibit you from working with these individuals, please choose a different site.

The following is a general list of community programs and issues that may address an area of personal interest to you:

COMMUNITY NEEDS

- * ALCOHOL / DRUG ADDICTION PROGRAMS
- * MENTORING / SENIOR COMPANION
- * DAY CARE
- * RECREATION
- * NUTRITION AND HEALTH
- * HANDICAPPED SERVICES
- * CONSERVATION
- * COURTS AND CORRECTIONS
- * TUTORING
- * FUND RAISING
- * CRISIS INTERVENTION
- * THERAPY (ART, ACTIVITIES, OCCUPATIONAL, etc.)
- * WOMENS' ISSUES

Hibbing Community College Service-Learning Student Information

To be completed by student

Student ID#: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone #: _____ **Work Phone #:** _____

Message/Other phone #: _____

Email address: _____

Please list all phone numbers where you can be reached. It is very important that you update your contact information with HCC and your service site if it changes.



This application is for the following academic period:

Fall _____ **Spring** _____ **Summer 1** _____ **Summer 2** _____

Year _____

Course Name: _____ **Course #:** _____

Instructor's Name: _____

Academic Major: _____ **Career Choice:** _____

Do you have any personal, physical, and/or mental disabilities which could prevent and/or limit you from any Service-Learning duties?

Yes _____ No _____ If so, describe:

Hibbing Community College is committed to serving students with special needs. If you need an accommodation for a disability (physical or learning), please contact our disabilities staff to make arrangements.

Service-Learning Contract

Service-learning is a crucial component of this class. This contract will outline our expectations of you as both a student and a service-learner. Upon signing this contract, you agree that you have read and understand the requirements listed below.

Attendance:

You are expected to arrange a time with your community agency that is satisfactory for all. You will be expected to be there at this time, unless there is an emergency. If you will be absent, you're expected to notify your site supervisor **in advance** of your absence. If you miss **three** service-learning sessions without prior notification, the agency is no longer obligated to continue partnering with you.

Please initial: _____

Hour Requirement:

You have been assigned _____ hours of service within this semester. Completion of these hours is a part of this class. Incomplete hours may seriously affect your grade. It is also expected that service hours are accumulated slowly and regularly throughout the semester. You will not be allowed to make up a large number of hours at one time.

Please initial: _____

Evaluation:

You are required to provide your site supervisor with any required evaluations. It is your responsibility to see that forms are completed and returned when due.

Please initial: _____

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality is a **MUST** in service-learning. As a student, you are expected to respect the privacy of the students/staff/clients that you work with and hold in confidence all information learned in the course of your service, whether that information is obtained through written records or daily interaction.

I Agree:

I will not disclose an individual's confidence to anyone, except: 1) as mandated by law or 2) to prevent a clear and immediate danger to a person or persons.

I will maintain a professional attitude, which upholds confidentiality of students/staff/clients and any sensitive situations at my assigned site.

I, upon leaving this position, will maintain student/staff/client confidentiality and hold confidential any information about sensitive situations at this site.

Please initial: _____

I have read the previous statements and understand the expectations required of me.

Student Signature

Date

Print Name

Service-Learning Entrance Survey

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey. When completed, return it to your instructor. Thank you for your time.

Age:

- 19 or younger 22-25 years 31 or older
 20-21 years 26-30 years

Major: _____

Have you participated in **service-learning** before: yes no

Do you have any previous **volunteer** experience: yes no

Volunteer programs in which you have participated:

1. _____ 3. _____
2. _____ 4. _____

Please select from the following options to provide your opinions of the statements below.

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| SA – Strongly Agree | SD – Strongly Disagree |
| A – Agree | D – Disagree |
| NA – Not Applicable | U – Undecided |

I have a good understanding of the needs and problems facing the community in which I live.

I feel comfortable around others who are different from me.

Working on group projects is more rewarding than working on individual projects.

I usually feel uncomfortable initiating conversation with people whom I don't know.

The things I learn in my courses are useful in my life.

My own problems are too large to spend time helping others.

I believe that helping others in need is one's social responsibility.

If personal time management was not a factor, I would be interested in donating my time to community service.

The Service-Learning Reflective Journal

Reflection reveals the learning in service learning. It is the window through which we may examine the impact of service participation, helping us to discover deeper insights about ourselves, our place in the community, and our responsibilities to the larger world.

A reflective journal is a useful way to record your thoughts and feelings about your experience. Your journal will be:

- * a series of entries. You will make an entry for **each time** you are at your service site. For example, if you tutor on Tuesdays and Thursdays, you will submit 2 entries per week.
- * your record of your experience. Write freely, edit later. Be honest – you will not be judged or graded according to your experience.
- * a more useful tool if you journal immediately after leaving your service site, while the experience is still fresh in your mind. At least take a few minutes after leaving to jot down notes.

You may choose whether to use the journal form included or not. However, each journal entry should include the following elements:

- A. Your name, service site, date, and hours worked
- B. An **objective account** of your experience: What happened? Write a brief, factual account of what you observed. It does **not** include your opinion. *This portion should be no more than 25% of your entry.*
- C. Your **reflective thoughts/feelings**: Interpret what you saw and heard today. What does it mean to you? Use emotion words (happy, surprised, frustrated, etc...) to describe your feelings. What knowledge and/or skills did you acquire today? What did you learn about yourself? *This portion should be the bulk of your journaling.*

***** Remember to observe confidentiality and use pseudonyms when referring to clients!*****

How do I demonstrate what I am learning and how am I graded?

You demonstrate what you are learning by your reflective journal entries, your verbal exchanges at reflective sessions, and/or papers/projects (if required.) The service-learning office also has contact with site supervisors who will provide further assessment of your efforts and the service-learning program. **Remember: you are not graded on your service.**

Discovering Your Definition of “Service”

(Pre-Service Experience)

The following questions will assist you in determining any ideas or preconceptions you may bring to your service placement. You are also asked to reflect on what you hope to put into and get out of your service-learning experience. Be creative and have fun!

How do you define service?

→ What is your personal definition of “service?”

Consider your definition of service and your service placement.

→ How does your work match or clash with your view of service?

→ What kinds of services are you providing at your agency?

How do your academic studies and service fit together?

→ Explain the title, subject, and main objectives of your class.

→ What or whom are you going to study in your classes this semester?

→ In your local community, can you identify examples of such places, people, concepts, issues, and/or needs?

→ How do these places, people, concepts, issues, and/or needs relate to your service placement?

Goals and Expectations:

List some expectations for your service placement this semester.

→ What do you plan to put into your service?

→ What do you expect to get out of this experience?

Set personal goals for your service placement and your academic class.

→ What class topic(s) do you want to learn about or explore further through this experience?

→ How do you want your understanding of this topic to grow from your service experience?

Bridging the Gap Between Community and Classroom (Mid-Service Experience)

Use these questions to reflect on your role at your agency and the needs of those you are serving. You now should be able to link your observations to your coursework.

Your Role at the Agency:

How would you summarize your role at the community site?

- What are your duties at your placement? How much client contact do you have?
- How much contact do you have with your site supervisor and other agency professionals?
- How much responsibility does your agency give you? How much responsibility is given to you by the client population?
- Are you fully utilized, only partially utilized, or overworked?
- How does this equate to or differ from your initial expectation?

The Needs of Those You Are Serving:

Are you directly serving the needs of a client population (i.e. tutoring children), or are you providing support to your agency placement (i.e. PR writing for a nonprofit)?

If you are serving the needs of a client population, consider these questions:

- How are clients identified or defined by the agency?
- Are the clients dependent on the agency's service? Do they have other alternatives?
- Do the clients seek services from the agency, or does the agency seek out those in need?
- Do the clients perceive that their needs are being met?
- In your situation, what constitutes successful service? What constitutes failure?

If you are offering support services to an agency, consider these questions:

- Is your service a crucial necessity or an added bonus to the agency's work?
- Is your service helping the agency to work more efficiently? How?
- Is the mission of the agency being realized to a greater degree because of your work?
- Does the agency perceive that its needs are being met through your service?
- In your situation, what constitutes successful service? What constitutes failure?

Do you feel that you've had to adapt in order to be more successful in your service?

How is Your Service Supplementing Your Coursework?

- Brainstorm some of the major concepts you have covered in your academic course.
- Have you utilized or observed these concepts while serving at your site?
- Has your experience confirmed or denied theories or lessons covered in class?
- What professional and personal skills have you needed to conduct your service?
- Have you honed or dispensed with skills taught or practiced in your class?
- Have you needed to gain any specific knowledge to be successful in your service?
- Can the knowledge that could have or should have been included be found in your coursework?
- What would make your time at the agency a greater learning experience?

Finding the Significance in What You Learned

(Post- Service Experience)

The following questions will provide an opportunity for you to draw conclusions and pull everything together from your service experience.

Final Thoughts and Impressions of Your Service Placement

Now that you have completed the majority of your service requirement and the semester is coming to a close, how would you summarize your overall experience with your community placement?

- Have you met your goals and expectations for this semester? Did your goals and expectations change throughout the course of your service?
- What was the most useful or practical aspect of the work that you did? What was the most meaningful? Were the most practical and most the meaningful aspects the same or different? Why?

Thinking Critically About Your Learning Experience

Most service-learning courses fall into three categories: skills related, theory related, or issues related. Think about your class. What percentage of your coursework focused on skills? What percentage focused on theory? What percentage focused on issues?

If your class dealt primarily with skills, consider these questions:

- What skills did you need during your placement?
- How did your service challenge you to improve your skills?
- Are the skills you covered in class applicable to the community? How?

If your class dealt mostly with theory, consider these questions:

- What was a theory studied in your class that was tested or addressed by your placement?
- Did your experience confirm or deny this theory's proposition?
- Is there a better or alternative theory?

If your class was mostly based on studying issues, consider these questions:

- What issues were involved in your service? What do you think about these issues?
- Do most people agree on how to deal with the issues or is there a debate?

Forming Opinions, Finding Applications, Designing Plans of Action

Based on your coursework, how would you judge your agency and your service-learning? If you could design an agency, project, or service to deal with the ideas covered in your course, would it be similar to your work this semester? How would it be different? What is one conclusion that you can draw from your service-learning experience?

Your Impressions of Service-Learning

Do you feel like service-learning helped make your class work more real and meaningful? Did your service-learning experience inspire you or reinforce your commitment to community service?

FINAL PROGRESS REPORT

Progress report for _____ Agency/Organization _____
 Evaluation Period from _____ to _____ Hours volunteered _____

Please evaluate the progress and achievement so that the student can be assisted in improving.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE	NEEDS HELP	AVERAGE	GOOD	EXCELLENT	CANNOT RATE	COMMENTS
Punctual: gets to work on time Times Absent _____ Times Tardy _____						
Dependability: prompt, trustworthy, follows directions, meets obligations						
Adaptability: catches on fast, follows detailed instructions, can switch jobs						
Ability to get along: cooperative, well mannered, social and emotional stability						
Attitude: enthusiastic, a good team worker, willing to cooperate, desires to improve						
Initiative: ability to work without supervision, self-motivating						
Accepts suggestions: eager to improve, seeks assistance, follows through						

Date _____ Student Signature _____
 Please return to the Service-Learning Office, Hibbing Community College - 1515 E. 25th St. - Hibbing, MN 55746
 Supervisor Signature _____
OVER

PERFORMANCE OF STUDENT

- | | | (A Great Deal | | | | Not at All) |
|----|--|-----------------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1. | Did the expectations of the students seem to match those of the agency? | | | | | |
| 2. | Did your service-learning students make a significant contribution to your site? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | Would you consider taking another service-learning student at your site in the future? | Yes | | Not Sure | | No |

4. If there have been any problems, describe the circumstances and the outcome:

5. Can you think of any ways in which Hibbing Community College can improve placement procedures for your site?

6. Further Comments:

Service-Learning Exit Survey

Please take a few minutes to complete this survey regarding your service-learning experience.

Age:

- 19 or younger
- 20 – 21
- 22 – 25
- 26 – 30
- 31 or older

Major: _____

Do you have any previous volunteer experience? Yes or No

If so, please list the volunteer programs you had participated in prior to service-learning:

Please select from the following options to answer the questions below.

Strongly Agree (SD)

Disagree (D)

Agree (A)

Strongly Disagree (SD)

Undecided (U)

Not Applicable (NA)

_____ I have a good understanding of the needs and problems facing the community in which I live.

_____ I feel comfortable around others who are different from me.

_____ Working on group projects is more rewarding than working on individual projects.

_____ I usually feel uncomfortable initiating conversation with people whom I don't know.

_____ The things I learn in my courses are useful in my life.

_____ My own problems are too large to spend time helping others.

_____ I believe that helping others in need is one's social responsibility.

_____ If personal time management was not a factor, I would be interested in donating my time to community service.

Using this scale, rank the following outcomes according to what you have gained from your service-learning experience:

Low Priority		Medium Priority		High Priority
1	2	3	4	5

- _____ Explored new identities and unfamiliar roles
- _____ Developed better communication skills
- _____ Made contacts for future job possibilities
- _____ Developed a sense of usefulness/satisfaction in doing something worthwhile
- _____ Applied academic knowledge and skills to real problems
- _____ Explored an academic major
- _____ Understood and appreciated diversity within a community

Has your opinion of service-learning changed from your initial reaction? How so?

Please feel free to contribute any comments, complaints, or suggestions below.
