

Service Learning Project Guide



GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS AND STUDENT-YOUTH GROUPS AGED 14 THROUGH COLLEGE.

WHAT IS SERVICE LEARNING? Learning by doing through an act of giving.

TRAITS OF SERVICE LEARNING:

- Commitment to community partnership
- Learning and academic rigor
- Intentional, reflective thinking
- Practice of civic responsibility

Unlike volunteering, service learning requires pre-service research, intentional reflection before during and after service, and ongoing learning and participation with organization and/or involvement with cause/issue(s).



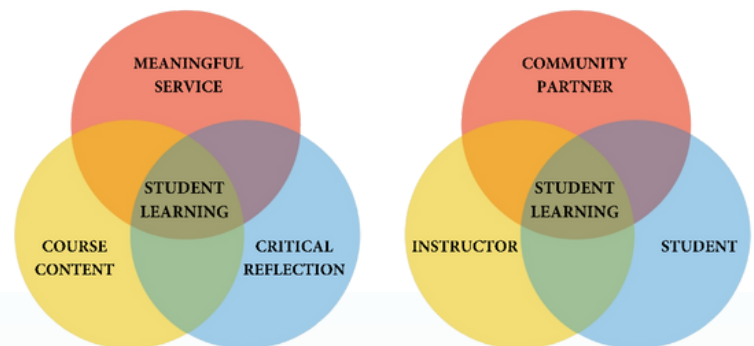
Reflection is key to understand the issue, the immediate impact you can have now and the impact you can have in the future after the service.

Reflection could be guided discussion, an informal free write, and/or a formal written assignment. See reflection prompts below.

BENEFITS OF SERVICE LEARNING:

- Helps students apply the objectives of the course
- Allows students to see a different perspective
- Builds community
- Builds interpersonal and intercultural communication skills
- Teamwork
- Problem solving
- Starts the networking process
- Increases graduation rates
- Service-learning aids in retention
- Benefits student, community, and cause

Key Components of Service Learning



BEFORE YOUR SERVICE PROJECT TIME

Research and discuss: the impact of the “big picture” issue(s) related to the service Bridging provides; Racial and Social Inequities inherent in systems that disproportionately affect BIPOC populations.

POVERTY

HOMELESSNESS

**LACK OF
AFFORDABLE
HOUSING**

**ECONOMIC
JUSTICE**

**ECONOMIC
FAIRNESS**

**WEALTH
GAP**



Pre-Service Reflection

- Why do poverty, homelessness, and lack of affordable housing, etc. exist?
- What are some causes of poverty, homelessness, and lack of affordable housing, etc.?
- What are some effects of poverty, homelessness, and lack of affordable housing, etc.?
- Why does the organization (Bridging) exist? What service do they provide? What is their Mission and Vision?
- Next... how can we address this issue/need? What can we/I do?

AFTER YOUR SERVICE PROJECT TIME

Determine the “What”

- With what organization did you partner?
- Why did you choose to work on this cause/issue vs. others?
- Describe your experience in detail—what was your project? What did you actually do?
- What was the issue or need you addressed?
- What prior knowledge did you have about this issue/need, if any? If none, what did you learn?
- Did you feel like you made a positive impact? Why/why not?



Determine the “So What”

- How did it help you understand the course objectives and content?
- Why is it important to work on this particular issue/need?
- Why does it matter? What impact did I/We have?
- What were your goals? Your community partner’s goals?
- How does this project relate to lessons/discussions in class? (Be specific)
- What did you learn that surprised you?
- What would you have done differently?
- What did you learn about team work and communication?

Determine the “Now What”

- What’s next—what do you feel you know better since participating in this experience?
- What have you learned that you did not know earlier because of your participation?
- How has this experience changed the way you communicate with others?
- What connections can you make to this experience and your future education and/or career?
- What are some additional things you can do in the future to work toward positive change with these issues? Be specific.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- Bridging. Lives We Touch Blogs. <https://bridging.org/blog/>
- Bridging. <https://bridging.org/>
- Bridging 101. [Video]. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5Pcq7LcTUk&t=10s>
- Duncan, D. & Kopperud, J. (2008). Service learning companion. Wadsworth Cengage.
- Learning to Give. <https://www.learningtogive.org/resources/service-learning-101-guide-leaders>
- Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless. <https://www.mnhomelesscoalition.org/>
- Minnesota Housing Partnership. <https://mhponline.org/the-gap-in-affordable-housing-in-minnesota/>
- National Low Income Housing Coalition. <https://nlihc.org/explore-issues/why-we-care/problem>



**This Service Learning Guide was prepared by Joel Bisser, MAEd,
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This is a living guide, so if you have suggestions, resources and/or have questions, feel free to reach out!

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