

Service-Learning Programs

CAS Standards and Guidelines

April 2005

Part 1: MISSION

The primary mission of Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) is to engage students in experiences that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities for reflection intentionally designed to promote student learning and development.

S-LP must incorporate student learning and student development in their missions. In addition, S-LP must enhance the overall educational experience. S-LP must develop, record, disseminate, implement, and regularly review their missions and goals. Mission statements must be consistent with the mission and goals of the institution and with the standards in this document. S-LP must operate as integral parts of the institution's overall mission.

Part 2: PROGRAM

The formal education of students consists of the curriculum and the co-curriculum, and must promote student learning and student development that is purposeful and holistic. Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) must be integrated into and enhance both the academic curriculum and co-curricular programs. S-LP must identify relevant and desirable student learning and development outcomes and provide programs and services that encourage the achievement of those outcomes.

S-LP must:

- allow all participants to define their needs and interests
- engage students in responsible and purposeful actions to meet community-defined needs
- enable students to understand needs in the context of community assets
- articulate clear service and learning goals for everyone involved, including students, faculty and staff members, community agency personnel, and those being served;
- ensure intellectual rigor
- establish criteria for selecting community service sites to ensure productive learning opportunities for everyone involved
- educate students regarding the philosophy of service and learning, the particular community service site, the work they will do, and the people they will be serving in the community
- establish and implement risk management procedures to protect students, the institution, and the community agencies

- offer alternatives to ensure that students are not required to participate in service that violates a religious or moral belief
- engage students in reflection designed to enable them to deepen their understanding of themselves, the community, and the complexity of social problems and potential solutions
- educate students to differentiate between perpetuating dependence and building capacity within the community
- establish mechanisms to assess service and learning outcomes for students and communities
- provide on-going professional development and support to faculty and staff members

When course credit is offered for service-learning, the credit must be for learning, not only for service. Whether service-learning is for academic credit or not, the focus must be on learning and educational objectives, not on hours served.

S-LP must provide evidence of their impact on the achievement of student learning and development outcomes.

Relevant and desirable outcomes include: intellectual growth; effective communication; realistic self-appraisal; enhanced self-esteem; clarified values; professional choices; leadership development; healthy behaviors; civic values, knowledge, and skills; meaningful interpersonal relationships; independence; collaboration; social responsibility; satisfying and productive lifestyles; appreciation of diversity; spiritual awareness; and achievement of personal and educational goals.

The table below offers examples of evidence of achievement of student learning and development.

Relevant and Desirable Student Learning and Development Outcomes Include:	Examples of Evidence of Achievement
Intellectual growth	Produces personal and educational goal statements; Employs critical thinking in problem solving; Uses complex information from a variety of sources including personal experience and observation to form a decision or opinion; Earns a degree; Applies previously understood information and concepts to a new situation or setting; Expresses appreciation for literature, the fine arts, mathematics, sciences, and social sciences; Applies knowledge to local, national, and global social issues
Effective communication	Writes and speaks coherently and effectively; Listens effectively and can engage in controversy with civility; Writes and speaks after reflection; Able to influence others through writing, speaking or artistic expression; Effectively articulates abstract

	ideas; Uses appropriate syntax; Makes presentations or gives performances
Enhanced self-esteem	Shows self-respect and respect for others; Initiates actions toward achievement of goals; Takes reasonable risks; Demonstrates assertive behavior; Functions without need for constant reassurance from others
Realistic self-appraisal	Articulates personal skills and abilities; Makes decisions and acts in congruence with personal values; Acknowledges personal strengths and weaknesses; Articulates rationale for personal behavior; Seeks feedback from others; Learns from past experiences
Clarified values	Articulates personal values; Acts in congruence with personal values; Makes decisions that reflect personal values; Demonstrates willingness to scrutinize personal beliefs and values; Identifies personal, work, and lifestyle values and explains how they influence decision-making
Career choices	Articulates career choices based on assessment of interests, values, skills, and abilities; Documents knowledge, skills, and accomplishments resulting from formal education, work experience, service-learning, and volunteer experiences; Makes the connections between classroom and community-based learning; Can construct a resume with clear job objectives and evidence of related knowledge, skills, and accomplishments; Articulates the characteristics of a preferred work environment; Comprehends the world of work
Leadership development	Understands that leadership is a process rather than a position; Views all students as potential leaders; comprehends that leadership occurs at all levels of an organization; Articulates leadership philosophy or style in examining own leadership
Healthy behavior	Chooses behaviors and environments that promote health and reduce risk; Articulates the relationship between health and wellness and accomplishing life long goals; Exhibits behaviors that advance a healthy community
Meaningful interpersonal relationships	Develops and maintains satisfying interpersonal relationships; Establishes mutually rewarding relationships with friends and colleagues; Listens to and considers others' points of view; Treats others with respect
Independence	Exhibits self-reliant behaviors; Functions autonomously; Exhibits ability to function interdependently; Accepts supervision as needed; Manages time effectively
Collaboration	Works cooperatively with others; Seeks the involvement of others; Seeks feedback from others; Contributes to achievement of a group goal; Exhibits effective listening skills
Social responsibility	Understands and participates in relevant governance systems; Demonstrates civic engagement in campus, local, national, and global communities; Understands, abides by, and participates in

	the development, maintenance, and/or orderly change of community, social, and legal standards or norms; Appropriately challenges the unfair, unjust, or uncivil behavior of other individuals or groups; Participates in service-learning activities
Satisfying and productive lifestyles	Achieves balance between education, work, and leisure time; Articulates and meets goals for work, leisure, and education; Overcomes obstacles that hamper goal achievement; Functions on the basis of personal identity, ethical, spiritual, and moral values; Articulates long-term goals and objectives
Appreciating diversity	Understands one's own identity and culture; Seeks involvement with people different from oneself; Seeks involvement in diverse interests; Articulates the advantages and challenges of a diverse society; Challenges appropriately the abusive use of stereotypes by others; Understands the impact of diversity on one's own society; Develops an informed perspective on issues of diversity and democracy; Reflects on issues of power and privilege
Spiritual awareness	Develops and articulates personal belief system; Understands roles of spirituality in personal and group values and behaviors
Personal and educational goals	Sets, articulates, and pursues individual goals; Articulates personal and educational goals and objectives; Uses personal and educational goals to guide decisions; Understands the effect of one's personal and education goals on others

S-LP must be (a) intentional, (b) coherent, (c) based on theories and knowledge of learning and human development, (d) reflective of developmental and demographic profiles of the student population, and (e) responsive to needs of individuals, special populations, and communities.

S-LP must offer a wide range of curricular and co-curricular service-learning experiences appropriate for students at all developmental levels and with a variety of lifestyles and abilities.

Examples may include older students, commuter students, students who are parents, part-time students, fully employed students, and students with disabilities.

S-LP must initiate and maintain collaborative relations among faculty members and departments within the institution for the design and implementation of service-learning experiences. They must also develop partnerships with community-based organizations to meet organizations' service needs and to achieve student learning and development outcomes.

Service-learning experiences should include:

- *One-time and short-term experiences.* These can be designed to achieve a variety of student learning outcomes, including introducing students to service-learning as a critical aspect of their college education, enabling students to learn what types of service best suit their interests, familiarizing students with the community in which the

institution is located, and understanding the approaches different agencies take to address community problems. These experiences can be co-curricular or part of the academic curriculum, such as first-year seminars.

- *Discipline-based service-learning courses.* Such courses can be designed to enable students to deepen their understanding of course content, apply knowledge to practice, and test theory through practical application. These courses can be designed for students at all levels. Service-learning internships and capstone courses can provide opportunities for students to consider how disciplinary knowledge can be applied in a socially responsible manner in professional settings.
- *Community-based research.* Whether integrated into a course or done on an independent-study basis, students engage in community-based research work with faculty and community partners to design, conduct, analyze, and report research results to serve community purposes.
- *Intensive service-learning experiences.* Service-learning experiences can immerse students intensively in an unfamiliar setting or culture, whether domestically or abroad. They can engage in dialogue and problem solving with the people most affected by the issues and develop a sense of solidarity with people whose lives and perspectives differ from their own. These experiences vary in length from a one-week alternative break to a semester or a year.

The service-learning course syllabus or plan for co-curricular experiences should describe:

- needs that the service will address
- desired outcomes of the service and learning for all participants
- assignments that link service and academic content
- opportunities to reflect on one's personal reactions to service and learning experiences
- logistics (e.g., time required, transportation, materials required)
- nature of the service work
- roles and responsibilities of students and community members
- risk management procedures
- evaluation of the service and learning experiences and assessment of the degree to which desired outcomes were achieved

S-LP should foster student leadership through service-learning experiences and should encourage student-initiated and student-led service and learning.

Part 3: LEADERSHIP

Effective and ethical leadership is essential to the success of all organizations. Institutions must appoint, position, and empower Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) leaders within the administrative structure to accomplish stated missions. S-LP leaders at various levels must be selected on the basis of formal education and training, relevant work experience, personal skills and competencies, relevant

professional credentials, as well as potential for promoting learning and development in students, applying effective practices to educational processes, and enhancing institutional effectiveness. Institutions must determine expectations of accountability for leaders and fairly assess their performance.

S-LP leaders must exercise authority over resources for which they are responsible to achieve their respective missions.

S-LP leaders must:

- articulate a vision for their organization
- set goals and objectives based on the needs and capabilities of the population served
- promote student learning and development
- prescribe and practice ethical behavior
- recruit, select, supervise, and develop others in the organization
- manage financial resources
- coordinate human resources
- plan, budget for, and evaluate personnel and programs
- apply effective practices to educational and administrative processes
- communicate effectively
- initiate collaborative interaction between individuals and agencies that possess legitimate concerns and interests in the functional area

S-LP leaders must identify and find means to address individual, organizational, or environmental conditions that inhibit goal achievement.

S-LP leaders must promote campus environments that result in multiple opportunities for student learning and development.

S-LP leaders must continuously keep up to date with best practices and improve programs and services in response to changing needs of students and other constituents, and evolving national and institutional priorities.

Part 4: ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

Guided by an overarching intent to ensure student learning and development, Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) must be structured purposefully and managed effectively to achieve stated goals. Evidence of appropriate structure must include current and accessible policies and procedures, written performance expectations for all employees, functional workflow graphics or organizational charts, and clearly stated service delivery expectations.

Evidence of effective management must include use of comprehensive and accurate information for decisions, clear sources and channels of authority, effective communication practices, decision-making and conflict resolution procedures, responsiveness to changing conditions, accountability and evaluation systems, and

recognition and reward processes. Programs and services must provide channels within the organization for regular review of administrative policies and procedures.

Part 5: HUMAN RESOURCES

Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) must be staffed adequately by professionals qualified to accomplish the mission and goals or by faculty whose responsibilities include service-learning. Within established guidelines of the institution, S-LP must establish procedures for staff selection, training, and evaluation; set expectations for supervision, and provide appropriate professional development opportunities. The program and service must strive to improve the professional competence and skills of all personnel it employs.

S-LP professionals must hold an earned graduate degree in a field relevant to the position they hold or must possess an appropriate combination of educational credentials and related work experience.

Professional development of staff and faculty members engaged in service-learning programs should address how to:

- build relationships with community agencies
- establish and maintain collaborative relationships with campus units
- engage students in community action for the common good
- prepare, mentor, and monitor students to deliver services according to legal and risk management policies
- use learning strategies that are effective in achieving learning outcomes
- engage students in structured opportunities for reflection
- develop, implement, and evaluate service and learning goals
- facilitate the process of identifying student and community needs and interests
- clarify the responsibilities of students, the institution, and agencies
- match the unique needs of agencies and students
- sustain genuine and active commitment of students, the institution, and agencies
- educate, train, and support students to facilitate service-learning experiences for their peers
- ensure that the time-commitment for service and learning are balanced and appropriate
- foster participation by and with diverse populations
- develop fiscal and other resources for program support

Faculty and staff members who integrate service-learning into their courses should receive institutional support (e.g., reduced course load, mini-grants, or teaching assistants.)

SL-P staff should provide professional development for community partners regarding how to work effectively with students, faculty members, and staff in higher education institutions.

Degree or credential-seeking interns must be qualified by enrollment in an appropriate field of study and by relevant experience. These individuals must be trained and supervised adequately by S-LP professional staff members holding educational credentials and related work experience appropriate for supervision.

Student employees and volunteers must be carefully selected, trained, supervised, and evaluated. They must be trained on how and when to refer those in need of assistance to qualified S-LP staff members and have access to a supervisor for assistance in making these judgments. Student employees and volunteers must be provided clear and precise job descriptions, pre-service training based on assessed needs, and continuing staff development.

S-LP must have technical and support staff members adequate to accomplish its mission. S-LP staff members must be technologically proficient and qualified to perform their job functions, be knowledgeable of ethical and legal uses of technology, and have access to training. The level of staffing and workloads must be adequate and appropriate for program and service demands.

Salary levels and fringe benefits for all S-LP staff members must be commensurate with those for comparable positions within the institution, in similar institutions, and in the relevant geographic area.

S-LP must institute hiring and promotion practices that are fair, inclusive, and non-discriminatory. S-LP must employ a diverse staff to provide readily identifiable role models for students and to enrich the campus community.

S-LP must create and maintain position descriptions for all staff members and provide regular performance planning and appraisals.

S-LP must have a system for regular staff evaluation and must provide access to continuing education and professional development opportunities, including in-service training programs and participation in professional conferences and workshops.

Part 6: FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) must have adequate funding to accomplish mission and goals. Funding priorities must be determined within the context of the stated mission, goals, objectives, and comprehensive analysis of the needs and capabilities of students and the availability of internal or external resources.

S-LP must demonstrate fiscal responsibility and cost effectiveness consistent with institutional protocols.

Part 7: FACILITIES, TECHNOLOGY, AND EQUIPMENT

Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) must have adequate, suitably located facilities, adequate technology, and equipment to support its mission and goals efficiently and effectively. Facilities, technology, and equipment must be evaluated regularly and be in compliance with relevant federal, state, provincial, and local requirements to provide for access, health, safety, and security.

Part 8: LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

All faculty and staff members engaged in service-learning must be knowledgeable about and responsive to laws and regulations that relate to their respective responsibilities.

Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) staff members must inform users of programs and services and officials, as appropriate, of legal obligations and limitations including constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and case law; mandatory laws and orders emanating from federal, state/provincial and local governments; and the institution's policies.

All faculty and staff members engaged in service-learning must use reasonable and informed practices to limit the liability exposure of the institution, its officers, employees, and agents. All faculty and staff members engaged in service-learning must be informed about institutional and community organization policies regarding personal liability and related insurance coverage options.

The institution must provide access to legal advice for all faculty and staff members engaged in service-learning as needed to carry out assigned responsibilities.

The institution must inform all faculty and staff members and students engaged in service-learning about extraordinary or changing legal obligations and potential liabilities in a timely and systematic fashion.

Part 9: EQUITY AND ACCESS

Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) staff members must ensure that services and programs are provided on a fair and equitable basis. Facilities, programs, and services must be accessible. Hours of operation and delivery of and access to programs and services must be responsive to the needs of all students and other constituents. S-LP must adhere to the spirit and intent of equal opportunity laws.

S-LP must be open and readily accessible to all students and must not discriminate except where sanctioned by law and institutional policy. Discrimination must be avoided on the bases of age; color; creed; cultural heritage; disability; ethnicity; gender identity; nationality; political affiliation; religious affiliation; sex; sexual orientation; or social, economic, marital, or veteran status.

Consistent with their mission and goals, S-LP must take affirmative action to remedy significant imbalances in student participation and staffing patterns.

As the demographic profiles of campuses change and new instructional delivery methods are introduced, institutions must recognize the needs of students who participate in distance learning for access to programs and services offered on campus. Institutions must provide appropriate services in ways that are accessible to distance learners and assist them in identifying and gaining access to other appropriate services in their geographic region.

Part 10: CAMPUS AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS

Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) must establish, maintain, and promote effective relations with relevant individuals, campus offices, and external agencies.

If there is more than one campus unit that facilitates community service and service-learning experiences, those offices should share information and collaborate as appropriate.

S-LP should develop productive working relationships with a wide range of campus agencies, including risk management, transportation, health services, academic departments and colleges, leadership programs, orientation, student activities, and institutional relationships and development.

Service-learning flourishes best when the institution as a whole is engaged as a responsible citizen in its surrounding communities. S-LP professionals should advocate for the institution to share its resources with its community and to develop a wide range of mutually beneficial campus-community partnerships.

Part 11: DIVERSITY

Within the context of each institution's unique mission, diversity enriches the community and enhances the collegiate experience for all; therefore, Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) must nurture environments where commonalities and differences among people are recognized and honored.

S-LP must promote educational experiences that are characterized by open and continuous communication that deepens understanding of one's own identity, culture, and spirituality, and that of others. S-LP must educate and promote respect about commonalities and differences in their historical and cultural contexts.

S-LP must address the characteristics and needs of a diverse population when establishing and implementing policies and procedures.

Part 12: ETHICS

All persons involved in the delivery of Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) must adhere to the highest principles of ethical behavior. S-LP must develop or adopt and implement appropriate statements of ethical practice. S-LP must publish these statements and ensure their periodic review by relevant constituencies.

The faculty members, staff, and students involved in service-learning must be held to the same ethical standards as the SL-P staff members.

S-LP staff members must ensure that privacy and confidentiality are maintained with respect to all communications and records to the extent that such records are protected under the law and appropriate statements of ethical practice. Information contained in students' education records must not be disclosed without written consent except as allowed by relevant laws and institutional policies. S-LP staff members must disclose to appropriate authorities information judged to be of an emergency nature, especially when the safety of the individual or others is involved, or when otherwise required by institutional policy or relevant law.

All S-LP staff members must be aware of and comply with the provisions contained in the institution's human subjects research policy and in other relevant institutional policies addressing ethical practices and confidentiality of research data concerning individuals.

S-LP staff members must recognize and avoid personal conflict of interest or appearance thereof in their transactions with students and others.

S-LP staff members must strive to insure the fair, objective, and impartial treatment of all persons with whom they deal. S-LP staff members must not participate in nor condone any form of harassment that demeans persons or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive campus environment.

When handling institutional funds, all S-LP staff members must ensure that such funds are managed in accordance with established and responsible accounting procedures and the fiscal policies or processes of the institution.

S-LP staff members must perform their duties within the limits of their training, expertise, and competence. When these limits are exceeded, individuals in need of further assistance must be referred to persons possessing appropriate qualifications.

All faculty and staff members responsible for supervising service-learning activities must monitor student performance based on training expertise and competence and alter placements as needed.

S-LP staff members must use suitable means to confront and otherwise hold accountable other staff members who exhibit unethical behavior.

S-LP staff members must be knowledgeable about and practice ethical behavior in the use of technology.

Part 13: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Service-Learning Programs (S-LP) must conduct regular assessment and evaluations. S-LP must employ effective qualitative and quantitative methodologies as appropriate, to determine whether and to what degree the stated mission, goals, and student learning and development outcomes are being met as well as effectiveness of service to the community. The process must employ sufficient and sound assessment measures to ensure comprehensiveness. Data collected must include responses from students, agencies, and other affected constituencies.

S-LP must evaluate periodically how well programs complement and enhance the institution's stated mission and educational effectiveness and meets goals of the community organization and its clients.

Results of these evaluations must be used in revising and improving S-LP and in recognizing staff performance.