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Community Engagement

Service Learning

Student Handbook

Spring 2014

Tables of Contents

What is Service Learning? ………………………………………………………………… 3

Service Learning Evaluations ……………………………………………………………. 4

Service Learning Checklist ………………………………………………………………. 4

Steps to a Successful Service Learning Experience ……………………………… 5-7

Tips for a Successful Service Learning Experience ... 8

The Do Not’s of Service Learning ….. 8

Safety is a Priority ….. 9

Creating Closure at the Learning Site …………………………………………………. 9

CSU Sexual Harassment Policies …. 10

Community Engagement Staff …. 11



What is Service Learning?

Service learning is a teaching and learning method linking course content to “real-life” learning experiences in the community. Learning opportunities within the community provide students with a richer educational experience and greater understanding of course content. Through reflection activities students are given opportunities to understand their service learning experience, how their work benefits the community, and how their learning experience in the community links to theories and practicum presented through course content.

* *Key Elements of Service Learning:*
* Service learning links service to the community through academic study
* Service learning requires structured reflection of the community work that is integrated into the course work
* Service learning emphasizes working with organizations and individuals to address needs defined by the community
* Service learning includes civic responsibility, collaboration with the community, directed reflection, and critical thinking as part of the course
* Service learning results in clarification of career objectives and acquisition of work-related skills
* Service learning provides students with an excellent avenue to promote personal and professional growth
* *Service Learning is* ***NOT****:*
* Volunteerism – a volunteer is available to respond to any need that an organization may have (clerical, administrative, etc.), but a student involved in service learning is expected to make observations and work with the community in a manner that incorporates academic theories to achieve course-specific learning objectives.
* Internship – an internship’s primary purpose is to develop skills related to a specific technical field or profession.
* *Student Benefits:*
* Makes learning relevant
* Influences decisions regarding major career options
* Develops social responsibility and leadership skills
* Personalizes your educational experience
* Encourages active participation in the community
* Encourages explorations of values
* Allows learning from individuals who are different from and similar to you in age, class, gender, educational level, physical ability, sexual orientation, and life experiences
* Provides experience in the local communities as part of your classroom for learning
* Provides an understanding of the economic, political, and cultural structures of society and the impact these structures have on individuals, as well as specific groups
* Increases understanding of the four facets of community: justice, compassion, diversity and social responsibility
* *Community Benefits:*
* Access to knowledge and skills of university students
* Access to academic expertise
* Promotion of organizational sustainability
* Gaining new perspectives on programs and services
* Building a responsive work-forced community

Service Learning Evaluations

Evaluations from students and learning site supervisors are valuable when the office of Community Engagement is determining the ongoing nature of campus-community partnerships with particular community organizations. When evaluations are collected and processed, the service learning office, faculty member and risk manager can revisit the desirability of renewing the Service Learning Campus-Community Partnership Agreement with any particular community organization.

The pre- and post-service learning evaluations act as tools for measuring students' inclination to participate in service learning classes and the likeliness of students to participate as active members in their community.

Service Learning Checklist

The following **MUST** be completed in order to receive credit for your service learning assignment:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Step** | **Title** | **Details** | **Due Date** | **Completed** |
| **1** | Pre-Service Learning Evaluation | Complete online at:  [www.surveymonkey.com/s/Pre-SurveySpring2014](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Pre-SurveySpring2014) | Feb. 24,2014 |  |
| **2** | Last Day to Meet with Your Learning Site | Your professor provides community organization information; Meet with your learning site supervisor to discuss service learning hours. | Feb. 24, 2014 |  |
| **3** | Student Service Learning Plan & Agreement | Complete online at:  <http://servicelearning.csun.edu> | Feb. 24, 2014 |  |
| **4** | Student Time Sheet | 1. Download the PDF of the Student Time Sheet online from   <http://servicelearning.csun.edu/sites/default/files/Student%20Time%20Sheet.pdf>   1. Print out the time sheet and obtain your learning site supervisor’s initials verifying your service learning hours for that day. 2. Once you finished your service learning hours, obtain your learning site supervisor’s signature at the bottom of the time sheet. 3. Make two (2) copies of the signed document. 4. Return the **ORIGINAL** time sheet to the office of Community Engagement (Sierra Hall 443). 5. Give one copy to your professor.   7. Keep one copy for your records | May 9, 2014 |  |
| **5** | Learning Site supervisor  Evaluation of Student | Ask your learning site supervisor to complete the evaluation form online at:  <http://servicelearning.csun.edu/sites/default/files/Learning%20Site%20Supervisor%20Evaluation%20of%20Student.pdf> | May 9, 2014 |  |
| **6** | Post-Service Learning Evaluation | Complete online at:  [www.surveymonkey.com/s/Post-SurveySpring2014](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Post-SurveySpring2014) | May 9, 2014 |  |

Steps to a Successful Service Learning Experience

Your instructor has pre-selected one or more community partner(s) that have a strong history of collaborating with CSUN. You **MUST** make your selection from the list provided – **No substitutions can be made without the instructor’s consent and all Learning Sites must be an approved University partner.**

1. **Select a Learning Site from the List Provided by Your Instructor:**

* A few things to ask yourself as you make your selection include:
* What are my skills and interests?
* What is my most comfortable work setting (i.e. one-on-one, small groups, etc.)?
* What do I want to learn from my service learning experience (i.e. new skills, job experience, etc.)?
* What population do I most want to serve (i.e. school-age children, elderly, etc.)?
* How much time do I reasonably have to give each week?
* Does the community organization have business hours that are compatible with my schedule?
* Do I have adequate and reliable transportation to the community organization’s site?

1. **Contact the Learning Site to Discuss Your Service Learning Assignment**

* Phone or email the Learning Site Supervisor at the Community Organization you have selected and be prepared to share the following information with them:
* Tell them that you are a CSUN student
* Tell them that your instructor requires you to complete a service learning assignment
* Tell them the name of the instructor and class for which you are completing the assignment
* Arrange a date for your learning site orientation, confirm the address of the learning site, and ask for directions
* Be on time for your meeting

1. **Background Checks (Not Required By All Learning Sites)**

Background checks (which may include fingerprinting) are often required for service learning students who come into contact with protected classes of people, such as children, persons with disabilities, and persons living in assisted living facilities. The decision of a learning site to require a background check is solely up to the learning site’s interpretation of the laws or regulations that govern it. Learning sites are solely responsible for requesting background checks for service learning students placed at their sites. The university plays no role in this decision.

Federal and state laws and regulations governing background checks are very strict regarding the privacy of the person being reviewed. Most allow only the entity requesting the background check to have access to the results. Consequently, because the university is not the requesting community organization, no faculty or staff member will ever be given the specific results of a student’s background check. Learning sites are under strict guidelines to keep all background check information private, and can have their licenses revoked if they violate this right of privacy. This means that if a student takes two separate service learning courses, each requiring a background check, the student needs to submit to two background checks so that the results can be sent to two separate locations. This is true even if the service learning courses are in the same semester.

Although it is the sole responsibility of the learning site to determine whether a background check is necessary, that does not mean that the learning site is always responsible for paying for the process. If the learning site cannot cover the cost of the background check, then it is the student’s responsibility.

1. **TB Tests (Not Required By All Learning Sites)**

Students participating in service learning are often required to obtain a current TB Test before they begin their service learning assignment, which can be obtained from the Klotz Student Health Center at a cost of $5.00.

**The Community Engagement office will cover the $5.00 fee if you complete the following instructions for obtaining a TB test**:

* Visit the office of Community Engagement (SH- 443) and ask for a TB Authorization Form, which requires the following information:
* Your name as it appears on your official CSUN records
* Your 9-digit CSUN Student ID number
* The course title, number, and CSUN professor for which you are completing a Service Learning Assignment
* Name of the Learning Site you have selected to complete your Service Learning Assignment
* Arrange an appointment at the Klotz Student Health Center for a test and follow- up reading (48-72 hours after the test is administered).
* Go online to schedule an appointment or call at (818) 677-3666
* Schedule your test for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Friday; as you will need to go back in 2-3 days to have it “read” by the nurse
* If you do not go back for a reading within 48-72 hour time frame, you will need to arrange another appointment and start the process from the beginning; and you will be responsible for paying the $5.00 fee
* You will receive documentation of your clearance upon completion of the test reading
* You should retain your TB test document for your records and provide a copy for the community agency for which you are serving
* **NO TESTS WILL BE PROVIDED ON THURSDAYS!**

Download the TB test form here: <http://servicelearning.csun.edu/sites/default/files/Spring2014_TBTestFlyer-Final.pdf>

**\*\* Last day to receive Free TB Tests: March 14, 2014**

1. **Attend an Learning Site Orientation with the Community Organization**

Must be completed by February 24, 2014.

* Dress professionally and arrive to your appointment on time
* Be sure to take your course syllabus and details about the service learning assignment to share with your learning site supervisor so all persons have a clear understanding of the learning outcomes defined by the course instructor
* Discuss the days and times that you are available to complete your service learning assignment
* Ask about any minimum daily, weekly, or monthly time commitments they may require
* Determine the type(s) of work you will be doing while at the community organization to achieve the learning outcomes defined by the course instructor
* Ask about any training the community organization requires of students prior to beginning their service learning assignment

1. **Complete the Pre-Service Learning Evaluation –** Refer to “Evaluations” above.

Must be submitted by Friday, February 24, 2014.

* Complete a pre-service learning evaluation prior to beginning your service learning assignment using the online evaluation form available on the Community Engagement website, www.csun.edu/communityengagement/riskmanagement.shtml or at the direct link <http://www.csun.edu/communityengagement/students.shtml> - Choose Pre-survey button

1. **Complete and Submit the Student Service Learning Plan & Agreement**

Must be completed by February 24,2014.

The Student Service Learning Plan & Agreement has been developed as an online form and **must be completed by all students engaged in a service learning assignment prior to their first day at the learning site**. Students who participate in a service learning assignment without submitting a Student Service Learning Plan & Agreement are not covered under the SAFECLIP campus insurance program.

Part one (1) includes areas for students to provide information about themselves, emergency contact information, identify their community learning site and site supervisor, detail course information including articulating their learning and service objectives, and define the beginning and ending dates of their service learning assignment.

Part two (2) defines the participation guidelines for students engaged in a service learning assignment and are important in order to provide a positive learning experience. The guidelines acts as the student's acknowledgement of their responsibilities in completing their service learning paperwork, understanding of the potential risks associated with the service learning assignment, as well as the professional standards expected of them while at the learning site.

The Student Service Learning Plan & Agreement also informs students that they are personally responsible for paying any costs related to the treatment of any injury or illness they may suffer while at the learning site. For this reason, students are encouraged to have health insurance.

Complete and submit your Student Service Learning Plan & Agreement using the online form available on the Community Engagement website, www.csun.edu/communityengagement/riskmanagement.shtml or by using the direct link

1. **Community Engagement Student Time Sheets**

Must be completed by May 9, 2014.

Student Time Sheets document the hours that students serve at the learning site and the type(s) of activity they did while at the learning site and is available as a PDF document on the Community Engagement website, <http://servicelearning.csun.edu/sites/default/files/Student%20Time%20Sheet.pdf>

At the end of their service learning hours student **MUST**:

1. Print and sign their time sheet
2. Obtain a signature from the learning site supervisor
3. Return the completed document to the office of Community Engagement (Sierra Hall 443)
4. **Complete the Post-Service Learning Evaluation –** Refer to “Evaluations” above.

Must be completed by May 9, 2014.

* Complete an evaluation of the work you did for your service learning assignment using the online evaluation form available on the Community Engagement website, www.csun.edu/communityengagement/riskmanagement.shtml or by using the direct link <http://www.csun.edu/communityengagement/students.shtml> - Choose post-survey.

1. **Learning Site Supervisor Completes an Evaluation of Service Learning Student –** Refer to “Evaluations” above.

Must be completed by May 9, 2014.

* Ask your learning site supervisor to complete an evaluation of the work you did for your service learning assignment using the online evaluation form available on the Community Engagement website, <http://servicelearning.csun.edu/sites/default/files/Learning%20Site%20Supervisor%20Evaluation%20of%20Student.pdf>

Tips for a Successful Service Learning Experience

* Contact the office of Community Engagement whenever you need help (818-677-7395).
* **Don’t delay – get started early**! Some community organizations only accept a few students at a time, so it is best not to procrastinate. An early start also allows plenty of time to complete the hours and class assignments related to your community engagement experience.
* If you have problem contacting a community organization representative, try another community organization on your instructor’s list of selected learning sites. If you still experience difficulties, contact the office of Community Engagement for assistance.
* **Be flexible!** One aspect of service learning is working with people, but there are many areas and opportunities for learning.
* Communicate effectively with staff of the community organization. They are there to support you and to help you have a positive experience. It is ideal to show your learning site supervisors the course syllabus so that they can better accommodate your learning objectives.
* Participate in classroom discussions regarding your service learning experiences; share your thoughts and experiences with others. This will help you deal with new situations that may arise and will allow you insight as to how others might handle similar situations.
* Learn about the community and the people in it before making assumptions. You may come from a very different community than the one you will become part of through your service learning assignment.
* Make an effort to learn about existing strengths and needs of the community you are serving.
* Learn about the history of the community organization where you are completing your assignment – understand the agency’s purpose and goals and how you help the community organization.
* Be open to seeing things in new ways – from other viewpoints. Observe and respect cultural; differences in language, expectations, and values.
* Ask questions and do not just listen – **HEAR what is being said!**
* Make a point of knowing what you are expected to do in your assignment at the community organization as a service learning student.
* Critically think about the purpose of your service learning assignment and actively work toward meeting the community organization’s needs while understanding the relevance within your own area of study.
* Pay attention to how you practice power. Learn and serve **WITH** the people at the community organization. We are reaching our hands out, not down.
* Accept, enjoy, celebrate, and build on small successes!

The Do Not’s of Service Learning

* **DON'T** report to your learning site under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
* **DON'T** give or loan a client money or other personal belongings.
* **DON'T** make promises or commitments to a client that you cannot keep.
* **DON'T** give a client or community organization representative a ride in a personal vehicle.
* **DON'T** use your personal vehicle to provide services for your organization.
* **DON'T** tolerate verbal exchange of a sexual nature or engage in behavior that might be perceived as sexual with a client or community organization representative.
* **DON'T** tolerate verbal exchange or engage in behavior that might be perceived as discriminating against an individual on the basis of her/his age, race, gender, sexual orientation, ability or ethnicity.
* **DON'T** engage in any type of business with clients during the term of your service learning assignment.
* **DON'T** enter into personal relationships with a client or community organization representative during the term of your service learning assignment.
* **DO** know that you can request an alternative learning site if you are not comfortable with your current learning site.

Safety is a Priority

* Keep your automobile a non-attraction. Do not leave items visible in the car's interior. Place valuable articles in the trunk prior to arrival at learning site.
* If you take the bus, be sure to know the route and cost of bus fare.
* In case of a breakdown or a mix up with transportation, carry enough money for an alternate ride home.
* Develop a community safety net of resources in your learning site area.
* Get to know your learning site supervisor at the learning site.
* Familiarize yourself with people, places and things in the area that can be of assistance in times of emergency (i.e. know the location of phones, 24-hour stores, police station, etc.).
* Give the phone number of the agency where you'll be serving to a roommate, friend, or relative before leaving for your learning site.
* Use common sense and conduct yourself in a professional manner at all times. Every learning site has its own rules, policies, procedures, protocol and expectations, for which you are responsible. Familiarize yourself with the workings of the learning site. This will contribute to your success in service learning assignment.

Creating Closure at the Learning Site

***How can you, as a student service learner, best prepare yourself and individuals you have been working with for your departure?*** Through Community Engagement, students experience the frustrationsand difficulties as well as the successes and hopes of working with different populations on a short-term (semester-long) basis. Closure signifies the ending of an experience, and will involvea period of time meant to effectively prepare participants for the conclusion of a community engagement partnership.

1. **Give Advanced Notice Two to Three Weeks Before your Service Ends**

In anticipation of final visits to the learning site, you should inform the learning site supervisor and those with whom you have worked, the number of weeks left for your semester-long commitment. This way, the learning site supervisor will be alerted to the loss of assistance and the persons being served will have the opportunity to emotionally prepare for and express "Goodbyes."

1. **Plan a “Ceremony” for your Final Session**

Plan a gathering with drinks and snacks. This may be a time for acknowledgment, for sharingaccomplishments, providing certificates and awards, taking and sharing photographs, create abulletin board, photo album, or another memento to signify the experience.

1. **Write Letters**

Write a letter to the learning site and/or the person you served sharing how the experience changed you, what you learned, and the lasting impact the service has had on you. If you would like to continue writing after the semester, invite the individual(s) you worked with to write back.

1. **Give Small Gifts as Remembrances**

Make a tape of music both parties like, take a Polaroid camera to the last service learning visit and take pictures of each other to exchange, give a book (one that you have read together or one that you think the person might enjoy). Don’t spend large amounts of money on gifts, please!

1. **Behaviors to Avoid When Saying "Goodbye"**

Emotions may surface for you and the people you have been working with. It is likely that the people with whom you have worked have experienced losses and it is never an enjoyable part of a partnership. However, leaving a partnership without saying goodbye will leave both you and the other person feeling unsettled and abandoned. Be aware that you may become "romanticized" and may be inspired to make promises to perpetuate that feeling of good will. However, you must ***BE*** ***HONEST*** about ending the experience. Your time commitment is finished and it is appropriate for you to say goodbye. ***Do not make promises that cannot be kept.***

CSU Sexual Harassment Policies

The California State University Chancellor's Executive Order No. 345 requires each campus of The California State University to maintain a working and learning environment free from sexual harassment for its students, employees, and those who apply for student or employee status. The following federal and state statutes prohibit sexual harassment as a form of sex discrimination:

###### Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) – Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972; Government Code Section 12940; and the California Education Code, Section 200 et seq.

###### Responsibility – All members of the university community are responsible for ensuring that their conduct does not sexually harass any other member of the university community. This same responsibility extends to employees of third parties doing business with the University and to campus visitors. University administrators and supervisors have the further responsibility of preventing and eliminating sexual harassment within the areas they oversee. If administrators or supervisors know sexual harassment is occurring, receive a complaint of sexual harassment, or obtain information indicating possible sexual harassment, they must take immediate steps to ensure the matter is addressed, even if the issue or alleged problem is not within their assigned area of responsibility.

Faculty, staff, and students are expected to inform an appropriate administrator (i.e., deans or vice presidents) or other university officer (i.e., director of Human Resources) if they have reason to believe sexual harassment is occurring. Program administrators and department heads/chairs are responsible for taking appropriate steps to disseminate this policy statement to students and employees in their respective areas. All faculty, staff, and administrators will be held accountable for compliance with this.

###### Definition of Sexual Harassment – Sexual harassment is defined by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as follows: Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

* Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment or academic advancement.
* Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for affecting an individual's employment or academic standing
* Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work, learning, or social environment

###### Types of Sexual Harassment

* Verbal or physical contact with the intention of sexual relations may be quid pro quo (i.e., "in exchange" for favors such as promotions, employment perks, better grades etc.). The power of the person in authority (employer, supervisor, professor, etc.) to sexually harass increases in direct Correlation to lack of organization of the potential victim group – i.e., women laborers in the informal sector, temporary workers, students, women in institutions for the mentally/physically handicapped etc. are most vulnerable.
* Sexual harassment by colleagues
* Sexual harassment by clients – particularly in professions where women's role is "sexually packaged" – such as airhostesses, workers in beer bars, etc.
* Sexual objectification of an individual though sexual relation not intended (harassment on the road etc.). This can also include negative comments like "you're fat/ ugly" etc.
* Hostile, anti-woman environment (pornography in public places, foul language etc.). This may not be directed at any woman employee in particular, but the effect on women is one of discomfort.

###### Additional Resources:

###### Sexual Harassment in the Workplace [http://www.discriminationattorney.com/harasswk.html](http://www.discriminationattorney.com/harasswk.html" \t "_blank)

###### Sexual Harassment at the University [http://www.fullerton.edu/diversity/policies.asp?mode=policiesbrochure](http://www.fullerton.edu/diversity/policies.asp?mode=policiesbrochure" \t "_blank)

###### Community Engagement Staff

The office of Community Engagement is located in Sierra Hall 443 – (818) 677-7395

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