

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT  
SERVICE LEARNING STUDENT HANDBOOK  
SPRING 2016



**CSUN**

**COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT**

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18111 Nordhoff Street · Northridge · California 91330-8370 · Sierra Hall 422, UGS on the Roof  
Phone: (818) 677-7395 · Fax (818) 677-5935 · Website: <http://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/community-engagement>

**The California State University** · Bakersfield · Channel Islands · Chico · Dominguez Hills · East Bay · Fresno · Fullerton · Humboldt · Long Beach · Los Angeles ·  
Maritime Academy · Monterey Bay · Northridge · Pomona · Sacramento · San Bernardino · San Diego · San Francisco · San Jose · San Luis Obispo · San Marcos ·  
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## What is Service Learning?

There are many definitions of service learning in the literature, each one with common elements that define how service is conducted in conjunction with course content. Course content/concepts, service learning projects, and student reflection. The Office of Community Engagement at California State University, Northridge adopted the below definition in 2012.

**Service Learning** is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Faculty choose a limited number of meaningful partnerships with the goal of providing students with different, but consistent off-campus learning experiences. Through service learning, students from kindergartners to college students use what they learn in the classroom to solve real-life problems. They not only learn the practical applications of their studies, they become actively contributing citizens and community members through the service they perform.

### Key Elements of Service Learning:

- Service learning links service to the community through academic study.
- Service learning requires structured reflection of community work, which 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 integrating critical thinking into a 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.
- Student involved in service learning are expected to make observations and work with the community in a manner that **incorporates** academic theories in order to achieve course-specific learning objectives.

## The Benefits of Service Learning

### Student Benefits:

*Service Learning helps to...*

- Makes learning relevant
- Personalizes your educational experience
- Provides experience in the local communities to enhance learning
- Increases understanding of the four facets of community: justice, compassion, diversity and social responsibility
- 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
- Allows the opportunity to learn from individuals who are different from and similar to you in age, class, gender, educational level, physical ability, sexual orientation, and life experiences
- Encourages active participation in the community
- Develops social responsibility and leadership skills
- Influences decisions regarding major career options

## **Community Benefits:**

*Service Learning helps to...*

- Provide access to knowledge and skills of university students
- Provide access to academic expertise
- Promotion of organizational sustainability
- Gaining new perspectives on programs and services
- Building a responsive work-forced community

## **Getting Started With a Community Based Organization (CBO)**

Your instructor has pre-selected one or more community partner(s) that have a strong history of collaborating with CSUN and a partnership agreement on file with the office of Purchasing and Contracts. You can find a list of these community organizations in the S4 Database (<https://app.calstates4.com/csun/sites>).

**No substitutions can be made without the instructor's consent and an approved partnership agreement with CSUN's Office of Community Engagement.**

### **Step One:**

*Things to consider when selecting your Learning Site...*

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

### **Step two:**

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

Call 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 amount of hours you need to spend completing the service learning component of your course.
- Tell them the name of the instructor and class for which you are completing the assignment
- Arrange a date to attend any necessary training or orientation
- Confirm the address of the learning site
- Be on time

## Attend an In-person or Phone Learning Site Orientation with the Community Based Organization (CBO)

This must be completed on or before your first day participating at the organization

### Prepare by:

- Making sure to have your course syllabus and any details you have about the service learning assignment. Sharing this with your learning site supervisor will insure all persons **have a clear understanding of the learning outcomes defined by the course instructor.**
- Knowing what days and times you are available to complete your service learning assignment.

### Things You Can Expect to Be Covered at Site Orientation Include:

- The mission of the organization
- Minimum daily, weekly, or monthly time commitments they may require.
- Who will be your site supervisor
- How can you contact your site supervisor
- The procedures for checking in at the learning site
- Who will sign your daily timesheet
- If TB test or background checks are required
- What type(s) of work you will be doing while at the community organization to achieve the learning outcomes defined by the course instructor
- Any training the community organization requires
- Are they willing to fill out a Supervisor Evaluation of the Student Form
- The organization's privacy rights
- Any risk associated with the site

### Risk Identification

To ensure your safety while learning off campus please make sure to...

- Pay attention to all safety issues.
- Identify emergency exits.
- Locate fire extinguishers
- Identify obvious damage to floors, walls, or ceilings that might create a risk
- Discuss if you will ever work unsupervised with the organization's clients
- Take a tour of the site
- Find out where to park

## Possible Additional Organization's Requirements

### Background Checks (Not Required By All CBO's)

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 depends on the learning site's interpretation of the laws or regulations that govern it. As such, the decision to request a background checks from service learning students fall under the organizations responsibilities. 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 laws allow only the entity

requesting the background check to have access to the results. Consequently, because the university is not responsible for requesting the background check, **no faculty or staff member will ever be given the specific results of a student's background check.** All learning sites are under strict guidelines to keep 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, they will need to submit to two background checks so that the results can be sent separately to both locations. This holds true even if both service learning courses are taken 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 this responsibility falls to the student, not the university.**

### **TB Tests (Not Required By All Learning Sites)**

Students who will be working with minors or the elderly are often required to obtain a current TB Test before they begin their service learning assignment. This test can be obtained from the Klotz Student Health Center at a cost of \$5.00. The Office of Community Engagement will provide a limited number of vouchers to cover the cost of Service Learning Student's TB Tests. To receive a voucher, please visit the Office of Community Engagement (SH-422, UGS on the Roof, between January 25<sup>th</sup> and March 4<sup>th</sup>). Please be prepared to provide the following information:

- Your name as it appears on your official CSUN records
- Your 9-digit CSUN Student ID
- 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!

For more information visit:

<http://www.csun.edu/sites/default/files/TB%20Test%20Flyer%20Spring%202016%20%281%29.pdf>

## Risk Management & Student Forms

### *Student Learning Plan & Agreement (SLP&A)*

The **Student Learning Plan & Agreement (SLP&A)** is **Due prior** to reporting to the organization's site.

- Students should not fill out the Service Learning Plan and Agreement form until they have spoken to their professor, been accepted at an approved organization and discussed learning objectives, goals, duties and potential risks with the organization's site supervisor.
- The *Student Learning Plan & Agreement* is a **mandatory** agreement that serves as a contract between the university and the service learning student. It is a document of informed consent that demonstrates student's awareness of the potential risks and behavior expectations at the learning site.
- Students must submit a separate agreement for **each** leaning site they plan to work with.
- Students should not fill out the Service Learning Plan and Agreement form until they have spoken to their professor, been accepted at an approved organization and discussed learning objectives, goals, duties and potential risks with the organization's site supervisor.
- 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 and can be held liable for any damages incurred at the learning site.
- Students are required by campus Risk Management to **submit this agreement prior to reporting to the organization's site**. This is an online form that can be accessed and submitted through the Service Learning Database (<https://app.calstates4.com/csun>). Only students enrolled in a Service Learning course have access to log into the database. After students log in to the database with their CSUN credentials, unless their professor has already placed them, they will be prompted to select an organization from a list of approved sites. Once they have been placed with an organization and have provided an estimated number of service hours they will complete, students will be directed to the Service Learning Plan and Agreement form. If they are not, please contact the office of Community Engagement.
- Minors must also fill out a hard copy of this form, which can be obtained from the Office of Community Engagement. This physical copy must be filled out and signed by both the student and their parent/guardian.
- It is recommended that students' print or screen capture their completed SLP&A prior to hitting submit.

## Student Timesheet

**Student Timesheets** are **DUE BY Friday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

Student Timesheets should document all hours that a student serve at a learning site and the types of activity they participate in.

- This *Student Timesheet* is a **mandatory** document that students can print directly from the Community Engagement website or by using this link:  
[http://www.csun.edu/sites/default/files/Student Time Sheet-Fall 2015.pdf](http://www.csun.edu/sites/default/files/Student%20Time%20Sheet-Fall%202015.pdf)
- This form serves a risk management function by providing a record of when students were providing service at sites.
- Individual timesheets must be turned in for each site a student volunteers with.
- Students should have a site supervisor initial their timesheet every time they report to the site. This acknowledges that the daily activities and hours reported are accurate.
- **Students are required to upload a copy of their completed** timesheet(s) no later than Friday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016.
- Timesheets should be submitted online using the Timesheet Submission Form found at <https://app.calstates4.com/csun/content/time-sheet-submission-form-service-learning-students>  
(Students must log in prior to submitting their timesheet)
- All timesheets must include:
  - Site supervisor's initials next to daily activities
  - Site supervisor's signature and date
  - Student's signature and date
  - Total of all SL hours completed
- Students should keep a copy of their timesheet for their records.

## Site Supervisor's Evaluation of the Student

This form, which is required at the discretion of the professor, is meant to provide site supervisors with the chance to evaluate student performance.

- Students may be given an evaluation form by their professor or the community organization.
- If students are not provided with a form, they may use the one offered by the Office of Community Engagement. This can be accessed at  
<https://app.calstates4.com/sites/default/files/program-forms/Learning%20Site%20Supervisor%20Evaluation%20of%20Student.pdf>
- Completed evaluations should be turned in using the Service Learning Database.  
<https://app.calstates4.com/csun/content/new-supervisor-evaluation-form>.
- Please note students must log into the database using their CSUN credentials before viewing or submitting these forms.

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## **Pre-Service Learning Evaluation & Post-Service Learning Evaluation**

The Pre-Service Learning Evaluations and Post-Service Learning Evaluations are designed to measure students' **inclination** and **participation** in service learning classes and the likeliness of students to participate as active members in their community. These evaluations also improve and enhance the service learning experience for future CSUN students. Both evaluations are required at the discretion of the professor.

**Pre-Surveys** open Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and are due no later than Friday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016.

**Post-Surveys** open Saturday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016 and are due no later than Friday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

- These evaluations are meant to measure experiences **before** and **after** volunteering.
- Evaluations are to be submitted through the Service Learning Database. Links to the evaluations can be found on the Community Engagement website <http://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/community-engagement> or by using the direct links below

Pre-Survey: <https://app.calstates4.com/csun/content/pre-service-learning-evaluation>

Post Survey: <https://app.calstates4.com/csun/content/post-service-learning-evaluation>

## **Forms and Due Dates**

### **Student Forms**

- Student Service Learning Plan & Agreement Due: before beginning service  
Log into the S4 Database  
<https://app.calstates4.com/csun>
- Submit Student Timesheet Here Due by: May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
<https://app.calstates4.com/csun/content/time-sheet-submission-form-service-learning-students>
- Site Supervisor's Evaluation of the Student Due by: May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
Log into the S4 Database  
<https://app.calstates4.com/csun/content/new-supervisor-evaluation-form>
- Pre-Service Learning Evaluation (at professor's discretion) Due by: April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016  
<https://app.calstates4.com/csun/content/pre-service-learning-evaluation>
- Post-Service Learning Evaluation (at professor's discretion) Due By: May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
<https://app.calstates4.com/csun/content/post-service-learning-evaluation>

## **Tips for a Successful Service Learning Experience**

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- The following tips are meant to help ensure students have the best experience possible. If after reading these tips you need any further assistance please contact The Office of Community Engagement at 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.
- **Be flexible!** One aspect of service learning is working with people, but there are many areas and opportunities for learning.
- Communicate effectively with the community organization's staff. They are there to support you and to help you create a positive experience. Sharing the course syllabus with a site supervisor will help to guide your experience toward 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 provide 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 your chosen community organization. Understanding the agency's purpose and goals will help you to better serve the organization.
- Be open to form other viewpoints. Observe and respect cultural differences; this includes differences in language, expectations, and values.
- 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.

## 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 the 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 both your success and your safety.

## Creating Closure at the Learning Site

How can you, as a service learning student, best prepare yourself and individuals you have been working with for your departure? Through Community Engagement, students experience the frustrations and 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 involve a period of time meant to effectively prepare participants for the conclusion of a community engagement partnership.

- **Give an Advanced Notice of 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 of your 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."
- **Plan a "Ceremony" for your Final Session**  
Plan a gathering with drinks and snacks. This may be a time for acknowledgment, sharing accomplishments, providing certificates and awards, taking and sharing photographs or creating a bulletin board, photo album, or another memento to reflect on the experience.
- **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 communication after the semester, invite the individual(s) you worked with to write back.

- **Give Small Gifts as Remembrances**

Make a dvd 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). Please don't spend large amounts of money on gifts.

- **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.

### **Share Your Experiences**

The Office of Community Engagement would like to hear about your Service Learning project. Help us showcase the difference CSUN students are making in the community every semester by sharing your photos, videos and reflections using the link below.

<https://app.calstates4.com/csun/share-your-experience-photo-video-and-reflection-submissions>

Before taking videos or photos at your learning site please ask your subjects to sign a CSUN Video/Photo Release form. This form can be found at

<http://www.csun.edu/sites/default/files/form-CSU-Visual-Audio-Image-Release-Form.pdf>

### **Stay Connected! Like Us On Facebook**

Like us on Facebook to stay up to date with Community Engagement events and connected with community organizations.

You can also keep an eye out for social media contests which will run throughout the semester on our Facebook page and share your service learning related posts using the hashtag #CSUNserve



<https://www.facebook.com/CSUNCE>

# Community Engagement Contacts

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The Office of Community Engagement is located in Sierra Hall 422, UGS on the Roof. This suite is found on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor “rooftop” corridor of Sierra Hall. There is an elevator located in the southwest corner of Sierra Hall just around the corner from the large Geography Department globe.

