

Service-Learning Manual

For Community Partners

Centre for Innovative Service-Learning
Hong Kong Baptist University



香港浸會大學
HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY



創意研究院
Institute of Creativity



CENTRE FOR
INNOVATIVE
SERVICE-LEARNING
創新服務學習中心

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. About HKBU

The Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) is widely recognised for its distinctive education that prepares young people with the innovative and creative thinking skills that the 21st century demands. We are committed to preparing graduates to serve Hong Kong and beyond through studies grounded in community connectedness.

We Are Caring

We prepare graduates to serve Hong Kong through studies grounded in community connectedness.

We Are Creative

We encourage learners to think outside of the box and empower them to reimagine themselves as creative innovators fit for the 21st century.

We are Global

Our service goes beyond the local community. Students serve in countries such as Cambodia, China, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, India, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand with the very best practices of a liberal arts education.

1.2. About the Centre for Innovative Service-Learning (CISL)

HKBU endeavours to further develop service-learning (SL) and provide at least one opportunity for every willing student to participate by 2023. To realise this plan, the University has established the Centre for Innovative Service-Learning (CISL) in December 2017 to connect academic departments to community partners, facilitate the formation of interdisciplinary teams, and provide appropriate training and support for students and staff.

CISL is committed to supporting the development of SL opportunities that meet community needs and foster social changes. Through planning, executing, and reflecting on service experience, we endeavour to deliver the best student experience to enhance whole-person development, promote civic engagement and ethics, and instil in students a sense of purpose.

Resources and Support

CISL supports innovative academic activities with a focus on SL. CISL acts as a bridge between the university and the community. We support community partners by

- Identifying potential faculty and facilitating meetings with faculty members
- Assisting in planning and developing service-learning projects
- Providing administrative and logistic support
- Facilitating pre-service training to prepare students

1.3. WHAT IS SERVICE-LEARNING?

Service-Learning (SL) has been identified as a high-impact educational practice that can effectively prepare students for citizenship, work, and life (Kuh, 2008)¹. It differs from other forms of experiential learning in that it integrates community service with academic learning, and places equal emphasis on providing benefits to students and their community (Furco, 1996)². It engages students in activities that address human and community needs, together with structured opportunities for students to reflect on their intended learning outcomes (Jacoby, 1996)³.

The following diagrams show the components and objectives of an academic SL course.

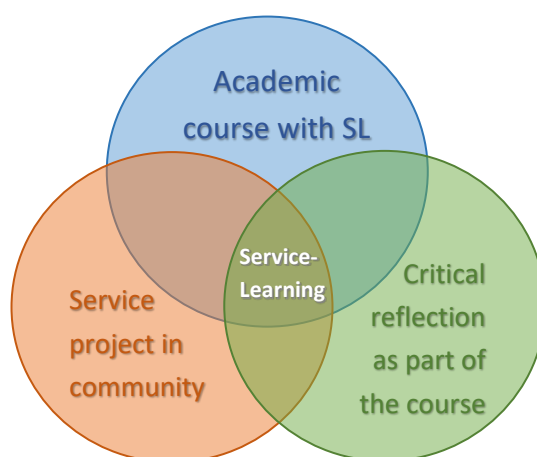


Figure 1: Components of SL

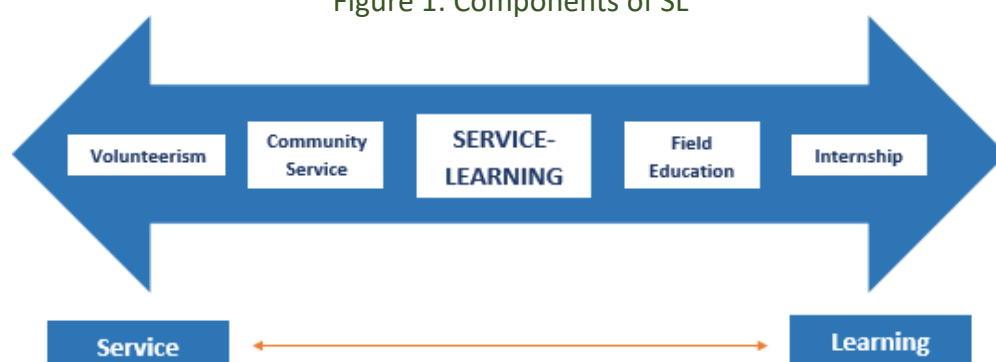


Figure 2: Distinguishing SL from other forms of service and learning

¹ Kuh, G. D. (2008). Excerpt from high-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter. *Association of American Colleges and Universities*.

² Furco, A. (1996). Service-learning: A balanced approach to experiential education.

³ Jacoby, B. (1996). *Service-Learning in Higher Education: Concepts and Practices. The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series*. Jossey-Bass Publishers, 350 Sansome St., San Francisco, CA 94104.

1.4. What is not Service-Learning?

SL vs Other Forms of Experiential Learning

	Volunteering	Internship in NGO	Academic Service-Learning
Main Objective	Allow students to get connected to the community, and acquire generic skills	Allow students to have an experience in the workplace to acquire skills to prepare for their future career	Integrate educational goal of a course with relevant community service to increase students' understanding of course content
Beneficiary	Primarily NGO gains extra human resources	Primarily for students to acquire work experience	Reciprocity – both students and community partner benefit equally
Relationship	Supervisor – Volunteer	Employer/Supervisor – Employee (Student)	Work as partners (NGO as Co-educators)
Supervisor	Mainly NGO assigns tasks and supervises the volunteers	Mainly employers check and give feedback on interns' work progress	Both community partners and course instructors check and provide feedback and advice on students' progress
Job Nature	Assist NGO with tasks that may or may not require the application of professional and academic knowledge	Using academic knowledge for tasks that do not necessarily address community needs	Using academic knowledge to address community needs
Duration	Varied duration depending on service nature	Longer duration (100-300 hours)	Shorter duration than internships
Academic Lecture	Not mandatory	Depend on the course	Anchor on an academic course
Preparation	Depend on the NGO	Depend on the course	Pre-service training is provided such as service attitude, service planning, communication skills training
Course Credit	Mostly without credit	With or without credit	With credit
Reflection	Not mandatory	Not mandatory	Structured reflection (Pre-service, mid-term, post-service)
Celebration	Not mandatory	Not mandatory	Presentation on what have been done

1.5. Service-Learning at HKBU

At HKBU, Service-Learning constitutes a key component of academic learning. By means of fostering innovation, students and faculty apply their academic knowledge and skills to address community needs off-campus. Meaningful service projects anchored in a specific curriculum are developed to contribute to the common good of humankind in the effort to enrich students' academic learning and personal growth. Structured Service-Learning opportunities are built into academic curricula directly, allowing students to reflect better upon their experience as citizens and whole persons and to conceptualise and enact effective relationships between their academic learning and community service locally, nationally, and globally.

Types of Service Projects:

The service projects could be:

- Direct - engaging in face-to-face service projects in which students directly impact individuals who use the service;
- Indirect - working on issues and projects that have clear benefits to the community but not necessarily to people with whom students work with;
- Research-based - engaging in research with the purpose of solving a community issue or affecting social change, or
- Advocacy - educating others about specific problems and projects that aim at creating awareness and actions.

Students would spend a minimum of ten hours, including preparation and direct service provided to the target population.

Service-Learning Project Examples

1. Students studying Chinese Medicine perform medical massage (tui na) in elderly home to help relieve the pain of the elderly
2. Students studying Chemistry conduct food analysis test on surplus food collected for the needy to ensure food safety
3. Students studying Film produce documentaries to tell the stories of ethnic minorities

2. Partnering as a Community Partner

2.1. Roles and Responsibilities as a Community Partner

1. Planning and preparation

Mutual understanding between course instructor and community partner is crucial for a successful SL course. It is important to state your needs and how students and their coursework can support your work. Communicate with course instructor early to discuss expectations and project timeline.

2. Orientation

The following points should be included:

- Background information of your organisation(e.g. mission, vision and function)
- Expectations towards students
- Needs of the target population
- Details of the service project, how students can contribute
- Reminders on working with service users

3. Training

Students may not be familiar with the service users, or they may lack skills for the service project. Specific training may be needed to ensure students acquire knowledge about their tasks.

4. Supervision

Feedback should be provided to students so they know how they can improve. It is also helpful to clarify questions arose, and prevent any misunderstanding and/or stereotype towards the service users.

5. Reflection

Reflection is a key component in an SL course. You may speak to students informally to discuss their experience in your organisation and what they have learned as a result.

6. Evaluation

Both course instructor and CISL value feedback from community partners. Upon completion of the SL project, community partners are invited to participate in evaluation to identify success factors and areas for improvement.

2.2. Benefits of Being a Community Partner

- Get connected to university resources and acquire skilled volunteers
- Gain human resources with fresh energy
- Develop meaningful projects to address social needs with students' creativity

2.3. Tips for Working with Students

1. Manage expectations

Both students and community partner have expectations towards the SL project. It is important to communicate with the students on their expectations about their learning through the project. You may want to let students know what you expect from them regarding appropriate behaviour and their contribution in the project.

2. Remember service-learning is different from internships and community work

Students are service-learners. They learn through working with the community, not for or to the community. On top of the service project, students should be able to learn about the relevant social issues, characteristics of the service users, and agency impact, etc.

3. Value students' academic knowledge

Different from volunteering and internship, students learn specific knowledge in their course which is relevant to the project. Allowing students to apply their knowledge is the key to let them gain the sense of success.

4. Address problem with students

There is no doubt that community partner is more familiar with the community/service user than the students. Conducting needs assessment and modifying service project with students allow them to gain deep understanding to the community, so that they are more passionate in the project.

5. Appreciate students' effort

Students want to be appreciated for their hard work like everyone does. A simple thank you email or card from you will be encouraging.

6. Be a mentor

Some students may not be familiar with service-learning. A partner is also a mentor to give them advice on implementation of their service project. Mentor plays an important role on students' learning and often determines the success of the project.

7. Plan around the academic calendar

Students must complete the service project within the course period. Below is a general guide to the HKBU Calendar:

1st Semester: 1st week of September to 1st week of December

2nd Semester: 3rd week of January to 4th week of April

2.4. Risk Factor and Management

1. Injury/Accident

For any cases of injury or accident during service, supervisor should send the student to a hospital/clinic for suitable treatment, and report the issue to the course instructor and/or CISL as soon as possible for any further action.

The University has a Group Personal Accident Policy for all students against bodily injuries arising from accidents while engaging in activities organised or arranged by the University and/or student organisations. For more details, please refer to the website of Finance Office:

<http://www.hkbu.edu.hk/~fohome/new/students/ins.htm>

Enquiries: 34115894

2. Confidentiality of Service Users

Please communicate your policy on confidentiality and photo-taking/sharing to students.

3. Sexual Conviction Record Check

For service project with children or mentally incapacitated persons (MIPs), Sexual Conviction Record Check may be required. If it is necessary, community partners are recommended to notify students as early as possible so they can get well prepared before the service project.

4. Improper Act

If a student has any improper act during service, and advice from supervisor was in vain, please contact CISL and the instructor for follow-up. If a student continuously fail to meet the expectations set by instructors and community partners, he/she may receive a fail grade.

3. Useful Forms

3.1. Service-Learning Plan and Agreement Form⁴

Service-Learning is an education practice based on the partnership between faculty members and community partners. Student should apply academic knowledge to address social needs. Through reflection, students can conceptualise and enact effective relationship between their academic learning and community service.

Course Code and Title: _____

Number of students: _____

Instructor's Contact Information

Name: _____ Contact Number: _____

Email: _____

Community Partner's Contact Information

Organisation Name: _____

Organisation Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Secondary Contact (if any): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Project Details

Tentative Date: _____ Location: _____

Service Users: _____ Approximate Number of Users: _____

Project Description:

⁴ Adapted from Centre for Excellence in Learning Through Service at Berea College. Community Partner Service-Learning Handbook. Retrieved from <http://www.berea.edu/celts/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2016/03/CommunityPartnerSLHandbook09.pdf>

Question for the Course Instructor:

1. Has the course instructor conducted site visit? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Expected outcome from the service project

Questions for the Community Partner:

1. Has the community partner received a copy of the course syllabus? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Describe the training, orientation, and supervision that the community partner will provide for the student(s).
3. List any particular guidelines (i.e., behavior, dress, confidentiality) that the student should know about the community partner organization.

Length of Agreement Term

This agreement form is valid until the end of the committed semester.

This agreement may be renewed upon mutual agreement, and is based on students' feedback, partners' evaluation and course activities planning.

Instructor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Community Partner's Signature: _____ Date: _____

3.2. Community Partner Service-Learning Evaluation Form⁵

Student Name: _____ Term: _____

Student ID: _____ Email: _____

Course Name: _____ Instructor: _____

Organisation Name: _____

Organisation Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Students are evaluated on a 1-5 scale, using the following approximate values:

1 – Unacceptable, 2 – Below Average, 3 – Average, 4 – Above Average, 5 – Excellent

Categories (examples only)*	Score:	Comments:
Attendance		
Teamwork		
Responsibility		
Problem-solving Skills		
Communication Skills		
Enthusiasm		
Professionalism		
Overall		

Signature: _____ Date: _____

* Categories to be amended according to the Course Intended Learning Outcomes

⁵ Adapted from Center for Service-Learning and Civic Engagement, Michigan State University. Service-Learning Toolkit – A guide for MSU Faculty and Instructor. Retrieved from <https://servicelearning.msu.edu/upload/Service-Learning-Toolkit.pdf>



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