



Service-Learning at South

How can Career Services help?

- We take care of all the liability paperwork and concerns!
- We connect students with non-profit agencies that match their skills and interests and your course objectives!
- We provide resources and links to help you incorporate Service-Learning into your syllabi.

SMCC Career Services Center

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Service Learning FAQs

How is Service-Learning different from volunteerism?

Service-Learning places equal emphasis on both the service and the learning, while volunteering primarily focuses on the service being provided. Service-Learning is a pedagogy that involves service and reflection on the service and is intended to enhance academic learning while providing a meaningful service to the community.

How and where do students serve?

There are primarily 3 types of Service-Learning available at South—*One-time service projects, group projects, and individual semester-long service assignments*. All of these options are considered “in-course” models of Service-Learning. **One-time projects** engage students (perhaps an entire class) in a pre-scheduled one-time event like a park clean-up,

mural painting, etc. **Group projects** involve students in service with or without leaving campus. Small groups select a project, plan it, and complete it together. **Individual Service-Learning assignments** involve students choosing an agency where they complete a designated number of Service-



Students and Staff cleaning up 24th St. & Broadway for the MLK Day of Service

Learning hours or complete a specific project. MCCC currently maintains a list of more than 400 non-profit agencies where students can serve.

We have non-traditional students at South that work & have children—will Service-Learning work here?

On Saturday, October 25, 2008 more than 50 students and staff came out at 8:00 in the morning to help revitalize TG Barr School for Make a Difference Day. On Monday, January 19, 2009—a school holiday—almost 100 students and staff volunteered to clean up the corner of 24th St and Broadway for the MLK Day of Service. In fact, so many students showed up eager to help that the group decided to clean up more than was expected. SMCC students are passionate about service and ready and willing to serve. However, Service-Learning does not have to be a course requirement and can instead be offered as an option or for extra credit so that it is not a burden to those students who would find it a hardship to give time to service.

Common Faculty Concerns about Service-Learning

Adapted from the Mesa Community College "Center for Service-Learning Faculty Manual," compiled by Duane Oakes, Faculty Director for the Center for Service-Learning

Is this just a feel-good excuse to water down academic standards?

This is an important and legitimate concern for all who are concerned with quality higher education, and it is the focus of much of the past and current research on Service-Learning. This research has shown that Service-Learning andragogy can actually be more rigorous than the traditional teaching strategies.

Students are not only required to master the standard text and lecture material, but they must also integrate their service experience into that context. This is a high level skill requiring effective critical thinking and reflection techniques designed to accomplish academic as well as effective outcomes.

How can I fit something into an already cramped curriculum?

Service-Learning is not an add-on to your current course requirements. It does not change or add to what is taught; it only enhances how it is taught. Some of the traditional classroom content accumulation activity is replaced with a more dynamic information processing activity. Some prior learning assignments are replaced with action and meaningful involvement of students in experiential learning.

Service-Learning Project Ideas



Make a Difference

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." Gandhi

Arbor Day Service



Keep in mind that these are just ideas to spark your own creativity. Use them to begin thinking about how Service-Learning might meet your own course objectives.

Art: Students design and paint a mural for a children's hospital, playground, or school. Or students visit a nursing home and draw portraits of the residents.

Business Statistics: Students work together to compile and interpret data for a non-profit agency. Most or all of the work is done in the classroom or as homework. Students go to the agency only once or not at all.

Computer Information Systems: Students work with a non-profit agency in designing databases or setting up networks.

Criminal Justice: Students work as a class or in groups to develop and implement a campus-wide "Crime Prevention Awareness Day."

Early Childhood Education: Students tutor after-school programs, work with social service agencies that provide services to children, etc.

English Composition: Students complete individual Service-Learning placements with non-profit agencies and write essays about their experience and/or topics related to the issues the agency addresses.

Graphic Design: Students create publicity materials for a non-profit organization.

History: Students create a history board game and donate it to an elementary school.

Journalism: Students research and write a positive story about a non-profit organization and get the story printed in a newspaper.

Marketing: Students create marketing materials for a small non-profit organization.

Psychology: Students serve individually with an organization that works with the mentally ill.

Public Speaking: Students individually serve on a one-time project approved by the instructor (feeding the homeless, sorting supplies for a food bank or clothing silo, reading to a child, etc.) and then present a persuasive speech about the issue or population they served.

Small Group Communication: In small groups, students plan a one-time service project for their small group. They must decide on a project and an agency, plan the project, and complete the project as a group.

Sociology: Students serve individually with an organization that serves community groups or works to better society.

Spanish: Students translate popular children's books into Spanish for a local shelter, then go and read the books in both Spanish and English.

Theater: Students produce and perform a scene or short play for children or the elderly.

Woodworking: Students design and build furniture for a family in need, like a family who has recently relocated after a disaster or refugees recently relocated to Arizona from another country.