Principles of Good Practice

Principles of Good Practice in Combining Service and Learning
An effective and sustained program:
1. Engages people in responsible and challenging actions for the common good.
2. Provides structured opportunities for people to reflect critically on their service experience.
3. Articulates clear service and learning goals for everyone involved.
4. Allows for those with needs to define those needs.
5. Clarifies the responsibilities of each person and organization involved.
6. Matches service providers and service needs through a process that recognizes changing circumstances.
7. Requires genuine, active, and sustained organizational commitment.
8. Includes training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition, and evaluation to meet service and learning goals.
9. Ensures that the time commitment for service and learning is flexible, appropriate, and in the best interest of all involved.
10. Is committed to program participation by and with diverse populations.


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Principles of Good Practice in Community Service-Learning Pedagogy
1. Academic credit is for learning, not for service.
2. Do not compromise academic rigor.
3. Set learning goals for students.
4. Establish criteria for the selection of community service placements.
5. Provide educationally sound mechanisms to harvest the community learning.
6. Provide supports for students to learn how to harvest the community learning.
7. Minimize the distinction between the student's community learning role and the classroom learning role.
8. Re-think the faculty instructional role.
9. Be prepared for uncertainty and variation in student learning outcomes.
10. Maximize the community responsibility orientation of the course.


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The attitudes, knowledge, values and cognitive skills that are valuable learning outcomes of service-learning as a pedagogy are not an end in themselves. They must be viewed as a "means to the end of citizenship."


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For more service-learning resources, call Campus Compact to order your copy of the Campus Compact Introduction to Service-Learning Toolkit or visit our web site, www.compact.org.

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Definitions

"Service-learning is a credit-bearing, educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility."


"Service-learning means a method under which students learn and develop through thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community and is coordinated with an institution of higher education, and with the community; helps foster civic responsibility; is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students enrolled; and includes structured time for students to reflect on the service experience."

American Association for Higher Education (AAHE): Series on Service-Learning in the Disciplines (adapted from the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993).

"Service-learning is a teaching method which combines community service with academic instruction as it focuses on critical, reflective thinking and civic responsibility. Service-learning programs involve students in organized community service that addresses local needs, while developing their academic skills, sense of civic responsibility, and commitment to the community."

Campus Compact National Center for Community Colleges

Essential Readings


Service-Learning on the world wide web

Campus Compact
http://www.campus.org

American Association of Community Colleges Service-Learning
http://www.aacc.nche.edu/support/SOEC/SCVC/0417M

American Association for Higher Education Service-Learning Project
http://www.ahe.org/servicelearning/index.html

The Colorado Service-Learning Home Page
http://CsLCOLORADO.EDU/EL/

Learn and Serve America Training and Technical Assistance Exchange
http://www.learnserveexchange.org

Lester, Steve & Surf
http://www.stevensurf.com/servicelearning/index.html

The National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
http://www.nsclearinghouse.edu

National Society for Experiential Education
http://www.nsef.org

The New England Resource Center for Higher Education
http://www.nerc.org