Guide to Academic Service-Learning

A Joint Publication of Minnesota State University’s
Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
and
Community Engagement Office

Service-Learning Website:  www.msuservicelearning.wordpress.com
Dear Community Partners,

Thank you for your interest in academic service-learning at Minnesota State, Mankato. The guide to follow is designed to help you build effective partnerships with Minnesota State—its faculty, staff, and students. We hope the partnerships you form with MSU will benefit your organization while simultaneously helping our students learn course material and gain a more developed sense of civic awareness and purpose. In short, we hope all involved with campus/community collaborations benefit equally and substantively.

The pages to follow will help you answer a variety of questions relating to partnerships between Minnesota State and your agency—questions such as:

- What is meant by the term community-based learning?
- What is the difference between service-learning and volunteering?
- How can our agency connect with specific faculty members or departments regarding possible projects?
- What can be done to help students truly learn from service?
- What steps should be taken to ensure an effective partnership between our agency and MSU?
- What are the agency responsibilities in a service-learning project?
- What are the faculty, staff, and student responsibilities in a service-learning project?
- How can our agency determine what form of community-based learning will be the most rewarding and beneficial?
- How can our agency secure quality volunteers from MSU?
- How can our agency secure quality interns from MSU?

Of course, this guide cannot provide all the answers. We hope to have the chance to speak with you personally about how the particular needs of your organization might be met through community-based learning projects. If you would like to speak further, you may contact Marilyn Lott (marilyn.lott@mnsu.edu; (507) 389-5746) or Stewart Ross (stewart.ross@mnsu.edu; (507) 345-7431). Please feel free to contact either Marilyn or Stewart, but because of the missions of their respective offices, agencies will likely find it beneficial to first contact Marilyn.

Thanks again,

Stewart Ross, Director, Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning
Marilyn Lott, Assistant Director for Community Engagement
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COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING AT MINNESOTA STATE
COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING AT MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY, MANKATO

A FEW FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS…

What is meant by the term community-based learning?

Community-based learning is an umbrella term capturing the wide range of learning activities connecting campus and community. CBL activities include community-service, field experiences, internships, volunteering, and service-learning. The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning focuses its attention on academic service-learning while the Community Engagement Office focuses its attention on volunteerism, community service, and special projects. In short, Minnesota State University students are encouraged to become involved in the Greater Mankato community in a variety of ways—from volunteering to internships to academic service-learning.

How does community-based learning differ from service-learning?

Service-learning is a specific form of community-based learning. Service-learning is defined as: "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 the course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility." (Bringle/Hatcher). In this document and others, you will often see service-learning referred to as academic service-learning to emphasize its connection to formal academic study.

What is the difference between academic service-learning and volunteering?

Academic service-learning is a teaching tool used by faculty and staff to help students both learn and serve. Volunteering is different in that it might involve a formal learning component, and it might not. Students often volunteer in the community with no faculty or staff involvement at all (for example, by becoming a big brother or sister). However, academic service-learning always involves some kind of formal involvement on the part of faculty or staff. Interestingly enough, the very same service activity can be service-learning in one setting and volunteering in another. For instance, a student who signs up through MSU’s Community Engagement Office to help build houses for Habitat for Humanity is engaged in a very important form of volunteering. If, however, a student works with Habitat for Humanity while simultaneously taking part in a class studying poverty in America and the affordable housing crisis, he or she is now taking part in a service-learning project. Both of these are important endeavors, but the service-learning project is designed to help the student contribute to the community and learn more about a particular area of academic study, for which the student receives a portion of his or her course credit. Volunteering does not involve a connection to a specific course and is designed for the benefit of the recipients and community.
Should my agency attempt to recruit student volunteers or participate in a service-learning project?

The answer to this will depend on the needs of your agency, and many agencies in Greater Mankato both recruit volunteers from MSU and establish service-learning partnerships. Once Minnesota State learns about the needs of your agency, we can help you determine if it makes most sense to pursue a service-learning partnership, recruit student volunteers, or to pursue both options. As a general rule, service-learning is especially useful if your organization requires students with particular expertise. An organization needing help with website development, for example, is likely to get this help from a Computer Science class rather than simply advertising for volunteers. Similarly, an organization wanting tutors with some expertise in child development might find partnering with an education course especially beneficial.

What does civic engagement have to do with community-based learning?

Civic engagement is something we hope evolves out of many, if not all, community-based learning activities. Civic engagement involves the "...individual and collective actions designed to identify and address issues of public concern. Civic engagement can take many forms, from individual volunteerism to organizational involvement to electoral participation. It can include efforts to directly address an issue, work with others in the community to solve a problem or interact with the institutions of representative democracy. Civic engagement encompasses a range of specific activities such as working in a soup kitchen, serving on a neighborhood association, writing a letter to an elected official or voting." (Pew Charitable Trusts) In a sense, the term civic engagement refers to the democratic habits we want students to possess upon graduation. When well constructed, community-based learning activities help students cultivate these democratic habits.

Who benefits from community-based learning projects?

Our sincere hope is that equal benefit goes to the agency using MSU students and the students themselves. To be frank, our students almost always benefit from being in the community. They come to see the community in new ways, they apply what they are learning in their classes, and they have the privilege of interacting with a variety of community leaders. It is more difficult to ensure that you, the community partner, truly benefit from having MSU students participate in your work. One of our main jobs is to work with you (and listen to you) to be sure that when you work with MSU students you gain as much as you give.
### Community-Based Learning Matrix

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<th>Recipient</th>
<th>BENEFICIARY</th>
<th>Provider</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Service</td>
<td>FOCUS</td>
<td>Learning</td>
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- **Volunteerism**: “The engagement of students in activities where the primary emphasis is on the service being provided and the primary intended beneficiary is clearly the service recipient.”

- **Community Service**: “The engagement of students in activities that primarily focus on the service being provided as well as the benefits the service activities have on the recipients (e.g., providing food to the homeless during the holidays). The students receive some benefits by learning how their service makes a difference in the lives of the service recipients.”

- **Field Education**: “Provides students with co-curricular service opportunities that are related to, but not fully integrated with, their formal academic studies. Students perform the service as part of a program that is designed primarily to enhance students’ understanding of a field of study, while also providing substantial emphasis on the service being provided.”

- **Internships**: “Engage college students in service activities primarily for the purpose of providing students with hands-on experiences that enhance their learning or understanding of issues related to a particular area of study.”

- **[Academic] Service-Learning**: “Service-learning programs are distinguished from other approaches to experiential education by their intention to benefit the provider and the recipient of the service equally, as well as to ensure equal focus on both the service being provided and the learning that is occurring.” [emphasis added]

**Taken from the article, “Service-learning: A balanced approach to experiential education” by Andrew Furco. The essay appears in the National Campus Compact’s publication, Introduction to Service-learning Toolkit.**
OVERVIEW OF ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING
ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING: DEFINITION AND GUIDELINES

It may make sense to begin this discussion by repeating (and expanding upon) the definition of academic service-learning provided earlier in this guide.

*Academic 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 the course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. Unlike extracurricular voluntary service, service-learning is a course-based service experience that produces the best outcomes when meaningful service activities are related to the course material through reflection activities such as directed writings, small group discussions, and class presentations. Unlike practica and internships, the experiential activity in a service learning course is not necessarily skill-based within the context of professional education."

(Bringle/Hatcher)

**Guidelines for Effective Academic Service-learning (ASL)**

- ASL meets *a real* need identified by the community.
- Clear expectations should exist for students, faculty, and community agencies. What work will students be completing? How will this work connect to course objectives? What do agencies need from faculty members? What do faculty members expect from agencies?
- Whenever possible ASL, involves an active partnership between faculty member and community agency (members of community agencies become *co-teachers*).
- ASL activities are linked directly to the learning objectives of a course.
- ASL rewards students for the learning arising from service, not the service itself.
- ASL engages students in *structured reflection* about their service-experience. Structured reflection is crucial and should be designed to create a bridge between service and course concepts and theories.
- ASL should be integrated into a course, not simply added on.
EXAMPLES OF ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING

Examples from other colleges and communities

The University of South Alabama (http://www.southalabama.edu/servelearn/)
“Field Work in Geography (GEO 480) at the University of South Alabama requires senior geography students to apply classroom knowledge to a local environmental problem. Students design and implement research projects that address some aspect of water quality degradation in Dog River, which drains almost all of urban and suburban Mobile. Their project must document the river’s decline, examine changes that have affected the watershed over time, investigate variations in human and physical factors that exacerbate or minimize the problem, or identify ways to improve the situation. The community partner for GEO 480 is Dog River Clearwater Revival, a local grassroots organization dedicated to improving water quality in the river and its tributaries. Students write proposals, carry out the necessary fieldwork and research, and write final project reports which are available to Dog River Clearwater Revival and to the public on a class internet site (http://dogriver.southalabama.edu). This class also provides experience in applying the scientific method, in gathering field data, and in professional writing. Students learn first-hand about a local environmental problem, and they serve the community by sharing their research with the community at large.”

The University of St. Thomas (http://www.stthomas.edu/servicelearning/)
“Students in the [Sociology of Immigration] course partnered with a class of English-Language Learners at Roosevelt High School comprised mostly of Somali immigrants. The UST students’ goal was to help the Somali students with their English conversational skills and to share information about Minnesotans’ cultural habits and traditions, particularly those of young adults. The Somali students told the UST students about experiences as new immigrants, their transition and adaptation to a post-industrial economy from an agri-pastoral country, adjustments to the climate, to separation from family members, etc. The UST students compiled a book of these oral histories that subsequently was archived at the Minnesota Historical Society.”

The University of Minnesota, Crookston (http://www.crk.umn.edu)
“An example of integrating service learning throughout the curriculum for UMC marketing majors can best be exemplified with the illustration of the Novel Cup project. The Novel Cup is a coffee shop located in Crookston that is operated by the Northwestern Mental Health Center (NMHC). It serves as a form of work therapy for patients of the NMHC. Therapy comes in the form of their work, interaction with customers, and establishing a normalized routine. The service learning efforts began long before the Novel Cup was open for business. In fact, when the service-learning project began, the Novel Cup coffee shop itself was really only a dream. The Northwestern Mental Health Center contacted UMC during the Spring 2000 semester to see if it would be interested in helping to develop a retail coffee shop within which its patients would be able to work for therapeutic reasons.

The process of initially establishing the coffee shop and developing a retail operation was deemed appropriate for the “Creative Marketing” course. Creative Marketing is the capstone class at UMC and consists primarily of senior marketing majors in their final collegiate semester. Students at this level have been exposed to a wide variety of theoretical models, ideas, and curriculum in numerous marketing classes. This project allowed them to put this knowledge into practical use. The students were responsible for helping to pick out interior furnishings, coffee and menu selection, themes and product lines within the shop, and developing a name for the new coffee shop. Students worked in groups to develop an initial strategy for the shop. One group from the class even developed the shop’s name, “Novel Cup.” This name is appropriate given that used books are also available at the shop in addition to food and beverages.”
Examples of Academic Service-learning at Minnesota State

Assisting recent immigrants
Students in several anthropology courses at MSU, Mankato work directly with Community Assistance for Refugees (CAR). Students participate in activities ranging from tutoring to data entry and reception. Students develop a better understanding of culture and diversity while CAR receives help meeting the needs of its clients.

Creating a community brochure
Students in an Urban and Regional Studies course recently worked with the city of Janesville to create a 12 page full-color guide to the city. The project, which was completed with the help of students at South Central College, involved meeting with Janesville city leaders, researching the city, and designing and printing the brochure. Students presented their work at a Janesville City Council meeting.

Capturing community stories
Students in a Women’s Studies course, “Coming of Age: Gender and Culture,” captured the stories of eleven women who grew up in Minnesota. The project is described on its website as follows:

- What was it like to grow up female in the past? Has coming of age in Minnesota changed from generation to generation? What memories stand out in the minds of women who grew up in previous decades? What do they want young people to know?

- To find out the answers to these questions, college students at Minnesota State University, Mankato, conducted oral history projects in fall 2004. They interviewed and collected artifacts from eleven women who grew up in Minnesota during the twentieth century. Using digital media equipment to acquire images, video, and audio files, they edited the materials and composed a webpage for each woman.

Sharing stories through public speaking
Students in a public speaking course taught in MSU’s Speech Communication Department recently gave speeches to several groups of local senior citizens residing in senior facilities in Mankato. The students gave speeches focusing on issues such as their community, significant influences in their lives, and their core values. Students then participated in break-out sessions where the seniors and students shared stories. Students learned more about public speaking and also helped create meaningful intergenerational communication.

A few other service-learning ideas…

- Students in a music education course partnering with a local elementary school to provide music instruction.
- Students in an art course partnering with an agency for individuals with disabilities to help create a mural representing the agency and its clients.
- Students in a photography course partnering with a local nonprofit to help the agency visually tell its story.
- Students in a computer science course helping an organization build a website.
**STEPS INVOLVED IN CREATING A SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT**

**STEP ONE:** Assess the needs of your organization

- Does your agency have unmet needs that could be met by students being trained in a particular area of study? (e.g., help designing a website from computer science students; help researching water quality from biology students)
- Could students learn about a particular subject while serving your agency? (e.g., gerontology students working in a local senior complex; communication students building relationships with clients while delivering meals)
- Some organizations will benefit by brainstorming to discover services they could begin offering through a service-learning project. For example, a food shelf might be able to expand its services by partnering with a class focusing on poverty in America; a local nonprofit might be able to create a new fundraising event by partnering with a class focusing on event planning.

**STEP TWO:** Assess your agency’s ability to help provide a meaningful and educational service experience for students

- Working with the faculty member and representatives of the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning can help you complete this step. That said, it is important all agencies are ready to work with students as they serve the organization.
- As a general rule, agencies should have at least one specific person responsible for helping students understand their roles. Agencies should also have some kind of formal orientation process or send a representative to a class to help students understand their task(s).
- Ideally, organizations will serve as co-teachers of MSU students. We want you to get as much or more than you give, but academic service-learning is meaningful only when agencies help students make connections between service and their educational experiences.

**STEP THREE:** Make connections with Minnesota State

- One easy way to make a connection is to post the needs of your agency on the Academic Service-Learning Blog (www.msuservicelearning.wordpress.com). You may also contact Minnesota State’s Marilyn Lott (marilyn.lott@mnsu.edu; 389-5746) or Stewart Ross (stewart.ross@mnsu.edu; 345-7431).
- If you would like to start a service-learning project in the fall, it is best to post on the blog and/or contact the above individuals before August 1st. If you would like to begin a service-learning project in the winter, it is best to post your interest on the blog and/or contact the above individuals before November 1st. The blog and the individuals above will help get the word out about your project, but this does not guarantee a specific connection can be made—very often it can, however, and we’ll work hard to try and find a match between agency and classroom.
STEP FOUR: Meet with faculty partner and/or make plans to attend Minnesota State’s Service-Learning Fair

- MSU currently offers two ways to participate in service-learning. The Service-Learning Fair is a longstanding event bringing agencies to campus in the fall and winter of each school year. Agencies interested in getting students to participate in their work spend a morning on MSU’s campus. Students from a variety of academic disciplines sign up to serve in a particular agency. Many agencies appreciate this method of connecting with the campus because it allows them to gain easy access to students studying a wide range of subjects.
- Another method of service-learning involves partnering with a specific class on campus. For example, an agency looking to increase its visibility in Mankato might partner with a marketing or public relations class. This arrangement assures the agency they will be working with students who are taking a class to help them acquire the skills the agency needs (e.g., students in a grant writing class helping you write or research grants). One of the main reasons the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning became involved in service-learning is to help agencies form these kinds of partnerships. As mentioned earlier, we cannot, of course, always guarantee a match, but we will do our best to help agencies partner with specific classes and faculty.
- Representatives from MSU will help an agency determine if their project is better suited for the Service-Learning Fair or if it makes sense to partner with one particular class.

STEP FIVE: Welcome students to your agency

- It is important students are oriented in some way to your agency. Sometimes this is done through a formal orientation process; sometimes it is done through a representative visiting a class to inform students about the agency and its role in the community.
- Very early in the process, the agency should communicate clear expectations for students. These expectations are to be emphasized (and re-emphasized) by the faculty member.
- Although MSU students are helping the agency, it should be very clear to students that the agency is doing more than accepting free labor. The agency is serving as a co-teacher for students, helping them grow as citizens and students. Please feel very comfortable respectfully communicating to students exactly what you expect from them while they are working with your agency. (please see Appendix C for more information about the orientation process)

STEP SIX: Maintain structure during the service experience

- The type of structure offered by the agency varies depending on the nature of the service-learning project. Sometimes an agency representative meets with students only once or twice while, for example, students work off-site on a training video
for the organization. In other kinds of service projects, students are working
directly on-site either with clients or on specific projects within your organization.

- When students are on-site, agencies typically come up with some kind of easily
  manageable system to keep track of student attendance (although this might also
  be done by the student and/or faculty member). Agencies also provide continual
  guidance throughout the process so students remain focused on the task or tasks
  they are completing for the agency.

- It is also important that, whenever possible, the agency help students reflect on
  their experience. Reflection is a key component of service-learning; often the
  faculty member and agency will develop joint strategies to help students
  understand the significance of their service. Even if this is not done, it is
  appreciated if agencies can help students reflect through such relatively easy
  efforts as being aware of course learning objectives, engaging students in informal
  conversations about these objectives, and simply inviting students to explore the
  meaning of their activity whenever possible.

**STEP SEVEN: Celebrate accomplishments**

- When properly planned and implemented, academic service-learning is nearly
  always rewarding and beneficial. There is no denying, however, that it is also
  hard work for all involved. At the end of the experience it is very useful if the
  students and agency celebrate their work together. The agency can highlight what
  it gained from the students and the students can celebrate what they learned from
  the service experience.

- Celebrations can take the form of pizza parties (students will generally be happy
  to pay), multi-media presentations, or a get together at a local coffee shop to
  present what has been done and learned. The format of the celebration is not
  important, but it is important that the students, faculty, and agency come together
  one final time to reflect on their time together.

**STEP EIGHT: Complete feedback form evaluating benefit you received from project**

- Form is found in Appendix A

**STEP NINE: Complete feedback forms for students**

- Form is found in Appendix A

**STEP TEN: Meet with faculty member to debrief**

- After the dust settles, it is important to discuss the overall project. What went
  well? What could be improved upon? Faculty members are encouraged to set up
  a debriefing session. If by chance you do not hear from them, please don’t
  hesitate to initiate contact yourself. Only through honest discussion can we
  continue to make service-learning truly beneficial to all involved.
SERVICE-LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Some of these have been addressed in one form or another earlier in this guide, but it is important faculty and staff, students, and community partners all have a clear idea what they should expect from one another.

Faculty and staff are expected to...

- Share course objectives with community partners
- Familiarize themselves with the community partner
- Create course assignments connecting the service experience to course objectives
- Periodically check in with community partners and always be easily accessible via phone or email
- Do their best to ensure professional behavior on the part of students
- Handle any problems immediately (e.g., a student not showing up for service)
- Treat the agency as a co-teacher, honoring and reflecting upon the perspectives offered by the community agency and its clients

Community partners are expected to...

- Help students understand the organization’s mission and goals
- Provide students with challenging work connected to learning objectives
- Help students reflect on the meaning of their service
- Teach students how to handle uncomfortable situations that might arise in service
- Accept their role as co-teachers and take reasonable steps to make the experience educational
- Maintain clear communication link between faculty and agency
- Clearly articulate for students what they can and cannot do within the organization
- Take part in the evaluation process

Students are expected to...

- Be prompt and professional
- Fulfill all reasonable tasks asked of them
- Communicate with their immediate supervisor should some portion of the service-learning experience make them overly uncomfortable
- Conform to the agency’s expectations regarding dress and language
- Strive to create connections between their service and their coursework
- Respect the confidentiality of the clients with whom they work
- Take part in the evaluation process
- Be open to learning about and from individuals different than themselves
VOLUNTEERING
VOLUNTEERING

While this document focuses on academic service-learning, agencies are often looking simply for student volunteers. Volunteering is, as discussed throughout this guide, not the same as academic service-learning. That said, volunteering is important to MSU students and the Greater Mankato community. Before discussing how MSU can help you find student volunteers, it makes sense to quickly review the differences between volunteering and service-learning.

VOLUNTEERING VS. SERVICE-LEARNING

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<th>Service Learning</th>
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<td>Community Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Field Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteerism</td>
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<td>Internship</td>
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Volunteerism: The emphasis is on the recipient (e.g., the senior citizen whose lawn is being raked) and on the service (the raking). There is typically little formal attention paid to what the provider (student) is getting from the experience and the activity is seldom linked to a formal area of academic study.

[Academic] Service-Learning: By carefully structuring the service, the experience balances service and learning. The student clearly provides a service, but in return the student receives a learning experience helping him or her better understand a specific area of study. Academic service-learning may or may not provide more service, but it always provides more formal academic learning.

Finding student volunteers

Agencies looking for volunteers should contact Marilyn Lott (marilyn.lott@mnsu.edu; 389-5746). You may also request that we post an event or volunteer need on MSU’s Community Engagement Office’s website (www.mnsu.edu/engagement) or post a request on Minnesota State’s Academic Service-Learning Blog (www.msuservicelearning.wordpress.com). We’ll do our best to get the request out to the university community. Along with basic information about your agency, we will want to know:

• If you are looking for volunteers for a one-time activity (e.g., help with the Mankato Pow Wow) or a long-term activity (e.g., being a tutor)
• The time commitment expected
• Number of volunteers you need
• What you expect students might learn/gain from this work
• Who will benefit from the volunteering
• Contact information for individual coordinating volunteers
• When you would like volunteers to begin
• Any special requirements (background checks, etc.)
INTERNSHIPS
INTERNSHIPS

Although they differ substantially from volunteering and service-learning, internships represent another form of community-based learning. The relationship between internships and other forms of community-based learning is described below.

**Internships vs. other forms of community-based learning**

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- **Service Learning**
- **Community Service**
- **Field Education**
- **Volunteerism**
- **Internship**

**Internships** emphasize professional education and thus tend to emphasize the student and learning far more than the recipient and service. Unlike volunteering, internships always have a formal academic component. Unlike service-learning, internships are not necessarily set up to help the community and student simultaneously (although they may do so). Instead, internships exist to help students become professionals in a particular field—from marketing to social work.

**Finding MSU interns**

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is not formally involved in facilitating internships.

Agencies interested in finding a student intern should contact Deenna Latus in Minnesota State’s Career Development Center. You may reach her at (507) 389-6061 or via email at deenna.latus@mnsu.edu. Deenna will ensure your request for interns reaches a wide range of MSU departments and students.
APPENDIX A: EVALUATION FORMS FOR ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING

**A few things about the forms to follow…**

1) These are simply recommended forms. We believe they will help partners meet assessment goals, but using these or other forms is entirely up to you.

2) You will notice forms are divided into “on-site” and “predominately off-site.” On-site forms are used when a student or team of students make multiple visits to your agency. The forms allow you to assess things such as the professionalism and responsibility of students coming to your agency at least several times throughout the semester. Often, however, the student or team of students is not expected to visit your agency with any regularity. A student or group of students may, for example, be creating a training video for use in your organization. This type of project requires a different form of assessment, and the forms for “predominately off-site” service take this into account.

3) You will also find different forms for individual students and a group of students. You will almost always have multiple service-learning students, but “group” forms should be used only in those cases when, for example, a group of five students is assigned a specific task within your agency.
Academic Service-Learning--Minnesota State University, Mankato

Evaluation for students working on-site

Student: ______________________________________
Agency: ______________________________________
Course: ______________________________________

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<th>4</th>
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<th>N/A</th>
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<td>1. The student showed a clear <strong>willingness to learn</strong></td>
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<td>2. The student demonstrated <strong>responsibility</strong> by being punctual, calling in advanced of missed times, completing hours, etc.</td>
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<td>3. The student was able to <strong>perform</strong> the tasks required by the Service-learning project</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The student supported the agency’s mission by demonstrating <strong>concern for the agency and clients</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The student demonstrated <strong>professionalism</strong> by respecting agency policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. The student <strong>participated</strong> in any required orientation activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. The student <strong>contributed</strong> to the agency in ways that went above and beyond the service project</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. The student <strong>communicated effectively</strong> with members of the agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Our agency would <strong>welcome this student back</strong> and/or <strong>recommend this student</strong> to another agency</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Comments (please use back of sheet if necessary):
Evaluation for small group/team of students working on-site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group members:</th>
<th>Agency:</th>
<th>Course:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| 1. | Group members showed a clear **willingness to learn** |
| 2. | Group members demonstrated **responsibility** by being punctual, calling in advance of missed times, completing hours, etc. |
| 3. | The group was able to **perform** the tasks required by the Service-learning project |
| 4. | Group members supported the agency’s mission by demonstrating **concern for the agency and clients** |
| 5. | Group members demonstrated **professionalism** by respecting agency policies |
| 6. | Group members **participated** in any required orientation activities |
| 7. | The group **contributed** to the agency in ways that went above and beyond the service project |
| 8. | Group members **communicated effectively** with members of the agency |
| 9. | Our agency would **welcome this group back** and/or **recommend this group** to another agency |

Comments (please feel free to comment on individual group members; use back of form if necessary):
Academic Service-Learning--Minnesota State University, Mankato

Evaluation for individual student working on service project predominately off-site

Student: ______________________________________
Agency: ______________________________________
Course: ______________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 Disagree</th>
<th>3 neutral</th>
<th>4 agree</th>
<th>5 strongly agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The student clearly worked to understand the project and agency needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The student demonstrated responsibility by maintaining necessary communication with the agency, attending any meetings, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The student communicated with the agency in a professional and competent fashion</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The student completed a project that will be of real value to the agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The student work met agency expectations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The agency would work again with this student and/or recommend this student to another agency</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Additional comments (please use back of form if necessary):
**Academic Service-Learning--Minnesota State University, Mankato**

**Evaluation for small group/team working on service project predominately off-site**

| Student: | ____________________________________________ |
| Agency: | ____________________________________________ |
| Course: | ____________________________________________ |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 Disagree</th>
<th>3 neutral</th>
<th>4 agree</th>
<th>5 strongly agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Group members clearly <strong>worked to understand the project and agency needs</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Group members demonstrated <strong>responsibility</strong> by maintaining necessary communication with the agency, attending any meetings, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Group members communicated with the agency in a <strong>professional and competent</strong> fashion</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The group completed a project that will be of <strong>real value</strong> to the agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The group’s work <strong>met agency expectations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. The agency would <strong>work again</strong> with this group and/or <strong>recommend this group</strong> to another agency</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Comments (feel free to comment on individual group members; please use back of form if necessary):
Academic Service-Learning--Minnesota State University, Mankato

**Evaluation of service-learning process by community partner**

The following form invites the community partner to offer feedback on the overall service-learning experience. Please be as honest and specific as possible. Thank you!

TO: The Center for Community-based learning and Civic Engagement
     Minnesota State University, Mankato
     Centennial Union, Room 173; Mankato, MN 56001
     Or send via fax:

FROM:
Name__________________________ Position____________________________
Agency___________________________ Date____________________________
Address__________________________ Phone___________________________
Course name/faculty____________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION OF SERVICE-LEARNING PROCESS</th>
<th>1 strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 Disagree</th>
<th>3 neutral</th>
<th>4 agree</th>
<th>5 strongly agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The students appeared well prepared for the work they did with your program</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The students’ contributions to the agency made the time and effort spent working with them worthwhile</td>
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<td>3. Effective communication was maintained between the agency and the faculty or staff member working with students</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The Service-learning students improved the capacity of your program in some meaningful way</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Staff at the Center for Community-based learning and Civic Engagement were helpful</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. The agency would do a project like this again (a project of similar scale, requiring similar amounts of work on both sides, etc.)</td>
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</table>

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS (continued on next page)**

1. How many Service-learning students were part of this particular project?
2. What do you believe students learned from working with your agency?

3. What, if anything, could have been done to improve the partnership between you and the course instructor?

4. What, if anything, could have been done to help you work more effectively with the students? (e.g., a class visit before the project started, a copy of the syllabus, etc.)

5. What, if anything, could the Center for Community-based learning and Civic Engagement have done to improve this Service-learning experience?

6. Are you interested in being a Service-learning partner in the future? If no, is there anything that could be changed to interest you in a future Service-learning project?
Academic Service-Learning--Minnesota State University, Mankato

Evaluation of service-learning process by student

Course: (name and semester/year):
Instructor:

PERSONAL INFORMATION (Optional)

Age: Gender: Male Female
Class year: FR Soph Jr. Sr. Graduate

Ethnicity (circle all that apply):
African-American Asian/Pacific Islander Foreign National Latino Native American White

THE SERVICE-LEARNING EXPERIENCE

1. I worked with the __________________________(organization) in_________________(town)

2. I contributed approximately __________ hours to this organization.

3. Please circle appropriate phrase: My service took place mostly at the agency/mostly away from the agency (Away from the agency means you seldom if ever went to the agency itself, but worked on a project for the agency on campus or on your computer, etc. At the agency suggest you often went and served at the agency itself off campus).

4. Please rate your service-experience on the following characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>1 strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 disagree</th>
<th>3 neutral</th>
<th>4 agree</th>
<th>5 strongly agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The agency staff was helpful and respectful</td>
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<td>2. I was given meaningful tasks to perform</td>
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<td>3. Orientation or a classroom visit helped me understand</td>
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<td>the tasks I was to perform within the agency</td>
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<td>4. My efforts appear to have been appreciated by the</td>
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<tr>
<td>agency</td>
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<td>5. My efforts were well supervised</td>
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<td>6. My work with the agency made me feel more</td>
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<td>connected to the local community</td>
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</table>
6. Please respond to the following statements about the way your Service-learning experience connected to the course in which it was assigned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1 strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 disagree</th>
<th>3 neutral</th>
<th>4 agree</th>
<th>5 strongly agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My Service-learning project related directly to course readings, lectures, and discussions</td>
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<td>2. My Service-learning project helped me better understand course concepts and theories</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. I would have learned more in this class by spending more time in class and less time on Service-learning</td>
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</table>

7. Please respond to the following statements regarding assignments relating to service-learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1 strongly disagree</th>
<th>2 disagree</th>
<th>3 neutral</th>
<th>4 agree</th>
<th>5 strongly agree</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Course assignments helped me better understand my service-experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. More opportunities for writing reflections would have enhanced my learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. More opportunities to discuss my service with classmates would have enhanced my learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Less time for class reflection and discussion would have been better</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Agency employees helped me understand the way my service connected to my class</td>
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8. Please comment on the impact Service-learning will have on your life outside the classroom.

**Because of this service-learning experience, my desire to do the following has become less likely, stayed about the same, become more likely**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>1 less likely</th>
<th>2 about the same</th>
<th>3 more likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Take another Service-learning course</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Get further involved with my community</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Participate in political efforts relating to the kind of agency with which I worked (e.g., an individual working in a homeless shelter becoming more interested in organizations working to eliminate homelessness)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Vote</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Interact with individuals different than myself</td>
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</table>

9. What was the most valuable thing that took place because of your Service-learning?

10. What could be done to improve this Service-learning experience?
APPENDIX B: TOPICS TO EXPLORE IN FIRST MEETING BETWEEN INSTRUCTOR AND COMMUNITY PARTNER

• **The needs of your agency**
  --Clearly articulate what it is you hope to gain from this collaboration

• **Learning objectives of course**
  --What is the instructor hoping his or her students will gain from the service experience? Will this particular service project help the students learn and serve? If not, can adjustments be made to create a match or should another partnership be pursued?

• **The mission of your agency**
  --Be sure instructor has a solid understanding of your organization (always good if you can bring a brochure, send the person to a website, etc.)

• **How your involvement with students will begin**
  --Should you speak to students during a class period? What kind of orientation must students receive?

• **Support needed to help make project a success**
  --How can the instructor help ensure students will do the best job possible?

• **Reflection**
  --What will the instructor do to help students make meaning out of the service experience? What can the agency do to help students reflect on the experience and connect experience to course learning objectives?

• **Assessment**
  --What, if any, of the assessment forms will be used by you and the faculty member, when will assessment be completed, who will do what forms of assessment, etc.

• **Communication throughout the process**
  --How will you and the instructor communicate throughout the service project (email periodically, etc.)
Each agency will develop its own way of orienting students to the Service-learning project. The following list of items is simply meant to help you reflect on the kinds of things students should know about your agency. Orientation procedures will likely differ for those agencies having students work on-site and those agencies that have students working off-site on project for the agency. In either case, however, students should be given an understanding of the agency, the role it plays in the community, and the benefits the agency will receive from student involvement. Students should also gain a clear understanding of what the agency expects from them. Potential topics to discuss include:

**Overview of agency and service**
- Mission and history of agency
- Programs and service offered by agency
- Role students will play in agency
- Reason the Service-learning project is important to the agency
- Tour of site (if possible)
- What do you expect students will learn
- Stories clarifying impact agency has within community

**Logistics**
- Any Risks associated with service-placement
- Any information about background checks, etc.
- How closely will students be supervised? By whom?
- Contact information for individual(s) responsible for supervising students
- Confidentiality issues
- How students will record service-hours
- Check in procedures if students working on-site
- Safety rules of site
- Who student should contact in case of problems with clients, etc.
- How will students be evaluated?
- Best ways for students to communicate with supervisor (email, phone)
We wish you the very best on your journey into academic service-learning

Please visit our blog to share your story, gain new insights on service-learning, propose new projects, etc.

www.msuservicelearning.wordpress.com

Thank you!