

SERVICE LEARNING COURSE INTEGRATION

Service Learning is “a credit-bearing, educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) 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.”

—Bringle, R., & Hatcher, J. (1995). A Service Learning Curriculum for Faculty. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, Vol. 2 (1), p.112.

The Center for Service Learning

The Center for Service Learning is located on the first floor of McCuan Hall in room 120. First established by a federal Learn and Serve grant in 2003, The Center for Service Learning has been working collaboratively with faculty, students and our community for over ten years. In the fall of 2012, The Center for Service Learning proudly joined the Maryland-D.C. Campus Compact in order to further Howard Community College's commitment to serving the community and developing civically engaged students.

Getting Started

Submitting a service learning integration proposal during the integration request period is the first step to incorporating a service learning component into a course at HCC.

Proposal Request Periods

There are two service learning proposal request periods at HCC each academic year. Request periods are announced via email to the faculty and adjunct faculty distribution lists and last approximately two weeks. Fall semester integration requests are accepted in May and spring semester integration requests are accepted in October.

Preparing A Proposal

Before submitting a course integration proposal, think through the primary elements of service learning pedagogy: course content, volunteer service and reflection. An overview of the entire integration process can be found on the next page. For the proposal, faculty only need to provide a general description of their vision for the desired service learning course integration.

Selection Process

Proposals are accepted on a case-by-case basis. Established, successful integrations receive priority in the review and selection process. However, new integrations have been accepted each semester. Many elements are considered when determining whether or not a proposal can be accepted, including the potential impact on student learning, the students' ability to meet a community need, the staff/faculty resources required to support the project, the presence of the community voice and the quality of proposed pedagogical practice. Faculty are notified via email within four weeks of the proposal submission deadline regarding the outcome of their request.

Collaboration

After a proposal is accepted, the faculty member will work collaboratively with service learning staff members to fully develop the service learning integration in the months leading up to the start of the semester. All course integration elements must be finalized no later than two weeks prior to the start of the academic term.

McCuan Hall 120
443.518.1885
servicelearning@howardcc.edu

BRITTANY BUDDEN
Director of Service Learning
bbudden@howardcc.edu
443.518.4432

EMILY GRUNBERGER
*Service Learning Operations
and Information Manager*
egrunberger@howardcc.edu
443.518.4586

CINDY PAIGE DESI
Service Learning Program Specialist
cpaigedesi@howardcc.edu
443.518.3069



SERVICE LEARNING COURSE INTEGRATION PROCESS

BEFORE YOU SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL...

1. Identify a Course Learning Objective

- What are the learning objectives for the course?
- Which learning objective could be achieved through a service learning assignment?
- What evidence would demonstrate that the learning objective has been achieved?

2. Select a Course Integration Model

- Direct Service, Self-Select Placement: Students select a placement site from a list of course-approved community partners, complete a designated number of volunteer service hours and interact directly with the community.
- Direct Service, Episodic: As a class or small group, students volunteer with a community partner for one volunteer shift.
- Special Project, Indirect Service: As a class, students meet a designated community need by completing a specified project that is donated or provided to a community partner.
- Special Project, Community Education: As a class, students educate the campus and/or community about a pivotal topic that meets community-identified needs.

AFTER YOUR PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTED...

(The following elements will be determined collaboratively with Service Learning staff)

3. Focus on the Service Experience

- How do you want your students to engage/interact with the community?
- On which social issue do you wish to focus your volunteer service efforts?
- How will your students meet a community need and honor the community voice?

4. Build Connections with Course Content

- How will the service experience connect directly to course content?
- What assignments/activities need to be developed to ensure that all students achieve the desired learning outcomes?
- What content knowledge do the students need prior to their service experience in order to maximize experiential learning?

5. Plan Opportunities for Reflection

- How will students reflect on their service experience before, during and after the experience has occurred?
- How will you guide the reflection assignments to ensure that all students think critically about their experience and the connections with the course content?

6. Evaluate Student Learning

- Credit is given for the learning, not the service.
- What evidence of student learning will you collect to illustrate the integration's effectiveness?

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