

COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING CENTER, CSULB

Service Learning and RTP Guide

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Community Service Learning Center: Retention, Tenure and Promotion Document

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Preface

The purpose of this document is threefold: (1) To satisfy the goals of the Learn and Serve Strategic Action Plan; (2) To center service learning in the areas of instructionally, scholarly and creative, and service related faculty activities *while at the same time* defining this work in relation to both essential and enhancing criteria; and (3) To provide our campus with a document that offers the language of recognition and reward to those faculty who engage in innovative pedagogy, generally, and service learning, specifically.

While it may seem obvious to place service learning in the category of *service* to the university and/or surrounding community, a careful examination of RTP policy documents for each college would challenge such an assumption. Indeed, the development and implementation of service learning courses is better located in the categories of instructionally and scholarly related activities as will be demonstrated by a careful review of this document. Faculty work is considered *service only* if the faculty member actually engages in volunteer community service individually or cooperatively with their students.

This document offers a review of University and College RTP Policy documents and locates the work of service learning within each. Additionally, for those colleges that require a written narrative to accompany other supporting materials for RTP review, this document offers faculty within our campus community the language to describe and define service learning pedagogy, support and resources for curriculum revision, and the recognition and reward deserving of this work.

What is Service Learning?

Service learning links academic study to community service through structured reflection; it engages students in responsible and challenging community service; it provides structured opportunities for students to reflect critically on their experiences; and it emphasizes learning in areas such as communication, critical thinking and community involvement. Through service learning campus-community connections are established; students gain a better understanding of the economic, social, and/or political issues within their community; students have the opportunity to meet people whose lives are different from, or perhaps similar to, their own; students learn valuable skills and often have the opportunity to use or share those that they have learned as well as enhancing self-confidence and self-esteem by helping others.

Community service learning might also function as a tool for motivating students to participate in the learning process and may be especially appealing to those who learn best through experience, involvement, and teaching others. Hence, service learning is “valuable for two fundamental and interrelated reasons: (1) service as a form of *practical experience enhances learning* in all areas of a university’s curriculum; and (2) the experience of community *reinforces moral and civic values* inherent in serving others” (Erich, 1995, p. 8 [italics original]). “Taken together, it is quite possible that students who enroll in community service learning courses are likely to emerge with an increased awareness and tolerance of diversity; competence in multi-cultural interaction, intellectual capacity, and a sense of empowerment; skills in critical thinking, discussion, and writing” (McKay, 2000, p. 343).

How does Service Learning fit into the agenda for higher education?

Two national organizations support and advocate the development of service learning curriculum. *Campus Compact*, a coalition of ninety-two college and university presidents, and the *Corporation for National Service*, a federal government agency, report data that give some indicators of the popularity of service-learning. As of 1998, 575 member campuses were participating in Campus Compact, with estimates that about 10,800 faculty members were involved in teaching 11,800 service-learning courses. (Campus Compact, 1998 as quoted in Eyler and Giles, 1999, p. 6). See <http://www.compact.org>.

The *American Association of State Colleges and Universities* recently published a booklet on public engagement that “offers a comprehensive analysis of what it takes to have sustained, productive relationships that truly make the university integral to social and economic progress” (AASCU, 2002, memo to accompany booklet). The booklet advocates university support through hiring practices, resource acquisition and allocation, reward programs, graduation requirements, and *curriculum development*. More information can be found at <http://www.aascu.org>.

The *National Society for Experiential Education* (<http://www.nsee.org>) is a membership association and national resource center that promotes experienced-based approaches to teaching and learning. NSEE strongly believes that students’ full learning potential can most

effectively be tapped through experience-based programs.

The Rand evaluation of the Corporation for *National Service's Learn and Serve Higher Education* (LASHE) programs studied the 458 colleges and universities that received LASHE grants. During the three-year period of evaluation, fiscal years 1995-97, these schools developed about three thousand new service learning courses (Campus Compact, 1998 as quoted in Eyler and Giles, 1999, p. 6).

UCLA sponsors a Service-learning clearinghouse project that has identified resources, outlets for publication, national programs, and other information useful to communities and campuses. This information is available at <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/slc/organizations.html>.

The National Communication Association (NCA), the major disciplinary organization for Communication Studies, has initiated the Experiential Learning in Communication Commission that sponsors conference papers and panels on experiential learning generally, and service learning specifically. Information on the NCA Experiential Learning in Communication Commission is available at www.nca.org. The discipline of Communication Studies has also published one of the aforementioned discipline-specific monographs entitled Voices of Democracy.

Other discipline-specific associations are organizing to support faculty and administrative efforts in the area of service learning and community engagement. These include *The American Philosophical Association*, *The Association for Public Administration*, *The American Anthropology Association*, *The American Educational Research Association*, *The American Political Science Association*, and *The National Science Foundation* (offers grant opportunities for community-university science education programs), and others.

The National Service-Learning Exchange, led by the national Youth Leadership Council supports service learning efforts in schools, colleges and universities, and community organizations across the country. They provide assistance in implementing service learning programs and can be contacted by <http://www.lsaexchange.org/>.

The number of publications in the field, both articles and books, has risen from almost none a decade ago to hundreds. The field now has a journal with the inception in 1994 of the *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, and a number of professional associations have begun to incorporate service-learning into annual conferences and publications. For example, the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) has made service-learning a focus in two of its major conferences (Faculty Roles & Rewards; How Students Learn) and, most important, has issued a series of eighteen monographs that presents models, research, theory, and actual syllabi for service-learning in particular disciplines (Campus Compact, 1998 as quoted in Eyler and Giles, 1999, p. 7). Their service-learning resource web page can be accessed at <http://www.aahe.org>.

Governor Gray Davis requested that the CSU and other public higher education segments in California establish a community service

requirement for undergraduate students (Resolution on the Governor's Request for a Community Service Graduation Requirement – #RF99-166). The CSU Academic Senate requested that each campus consider the governor's request and assess its potential impact in the CSU. The CSU Academic Senate in a May 1999 resolution (AS-2455-99) affirmed its commitment to fostering community service and particularly community service learning through the provision of incentives and resources for students and faculty engaging in community service learning activities; however, the resolution does not provide for mandating service through a graduation requirement. The California State Student Association has also affirmed the importance of community service and community service learning as a voluntary rather than mandated activity (October, 1999). In response to the Governor's request, the Chancellor of the California State University system has made available the resources necessary for individual campuses throughout the CSU system to develop and implement service learning pedagogy. Under the direction of Dr. Patricia Rozee, CSU, Long Beach has initiated the development of its Community Service Learning Center. Now in its fourth year, the Community Service Learning Center houses a Director, Associate Director, Community Partnerships Coordinator, Administrative Assistant to the Director, in addition to several undergraduate and graduate student assistants who assist faculty in identifying community agencies for student placements, developing, and implementing service learning courses. See <http://www.sfsu.edu/~senate/RF99-166.htm>

What sources of support are available for course and faculty development?

Faculty Award programs supported through Community Service Learning Center: CSLC sponsors two formal programs for faculty support. The Requests for Proposals (RFP) for course development are distributed to all faculty in Spring and Fall semester. Faculty-prepared proposals are competitively selected by a peer-committee, and thus, are reviewed for (1) their quality, (2) the feasibility of developing a new course or converting and existing course to service learning curriculum, and (3) degree of commitment by the Department/Chair to offer the course on a regular basis following its development. Faculty can receive either Assigned Time (3 units) or a Summer Stipend for course development.

Conference attendance: The Community Service Learning Center sponsors faculty travel to conferences related to service-learning for the purpose of (1) increasing faculty familiarity with the service learning curriculum, (2) presenting scholarly work on service learning, and/or (3) to hear speakers/specialists knowledgeable of service-learning as a pedagogical tool.

Individual, group, and departmental contexts for faculty instruction: Recipients of the faculty awards for course development attend six hours of workshop instruction focusing on the development of service-learning course curriculum. Workshops take two forms: six one-hour workshops or three two-hour workshops; workshop form is determined by the number of faculty participants and the term (Fall, Spring, or Summer) for which the award is given. In addition, the recent

appointment of the Associate Director for the Community Service Learning Center is an indicator of the campus commitment to faculty development in the area of service learning pedagogy.

How should these awards be documented in the RTP file?

Awards for service learning course development should be appropriately featured within the RTP file as competitively selected, campus-wide awards. This will be more fully explained in the section on “Defining Essential and Enhancing Criteria” for RTP. Faculty-prepared proposals are competitively selected by a peer-committee, and thus, are reviewed for (1) their quality, (2) the feasibility of developing a new course or converting an existing course to service learning curriculum, and (3) degree of commitment by the Department/Chair to offer the course on a regular basis following its development. Receipt of a faculty award for course development is equivalent to other campus supported award programs for curricular and faculty development such as Educational Innovation Awards or Assessment Planning or Project Grants (recently combined into the Enhancing Educational Effectiveness award program). Additionally, faculty are accountable for actually offering the completed course as a condition of the award in addition to participating in a service learning showcase panel or conducting a faculty-centered workshop – both focusing on the process and product of developing service learning courses.

What is the process involved in course development (new course, converted course, or GE Capstone course)?

- *Workshop structure:* The workshop begins by introducing the concept of service learning. Emphasis is placed on the ways in which service learning, as a form of experiential learning, differs from internships, volunteerism, or community service. The key component that sets service learning apart from other forms of experiential learning is *reflection*; hence, the core of the workshop centers on connecting course goals, learning objectives, opportunities for guided reflection and other relevant assignments, and assessment. The outcome of the workshop series is a completed service learning course syllabus.
- *Assignments:* Faculty participants are required to complete homework assignments prior to each workshop session. The first assignment is a draft of the course goals and instructional/learning objectives; second, faculty prepare a draft of reflection questions and/or other forms of guided reflection opportunities relevant to the learning objectives. Faculty must also incorporate a time-line for each guided reflection assignment as well as describe methods for assessment. Finally, faculty participants are required to provide a

draft of the course syllabus including information about community placements.

- *Final syllabus and course implementation:* The development of the course syllabus is very rigorous. The outcome of workshop participation is a completed syllabus that includes learning objectives, reflection exercises, a timeline for the community project and assignments, criteria for assessment, information about the community project and/or placements, appropriate documentation for the community placement, and relative weighting for course assignments and examinations.
- *Dealing with student concerns:* Faculty must also be prepared to deal with students' questions about the service learning component AND motivate them to participate in their own learning opportunity. Students are often concerned with the perception of the additional time commitment required outside of the classroom to complete service and reflection assignments. In designing the new course, faculty work to balance the course requirements; for existing courses, the service learning requirements replace assignments of equivalent magnitude (e.g., examinations or a major paper).
- *Establishing "Best Practices"* for satisfying service learning course criteria such as (1) Learning objectives are explicit and able to be accomplished within the hours allotted for students to be in the community; (2) Students should be in the community setting not less than 15 hours (one hour per week) – this is a minimum and not necessarily optimal for meeting course goals; (3) Community service, as defined by the community, and learning, as defined by the professor, are complementary and meet course learning objectives; (4) Professors are willing to form partnerships with one or more community agencies to promote quality and longevity in student placements; (5) Community service is continuous throughout the semester rather than in a "one-shot" experience and is directly related to the course content; and (6) Reflection (critical thinking) about the connections between course content and the community experience is performed and evaluated continuously throughout the semester.
- Faculty who do not receive the aforementioned awards adhere to the same rigorous standards for developing and implementing service learning courses. In most cases, they are urged to take advantage of the many services and sources of support offered by the CSULB Community Service Learning Center while adhering to the "best practices" listed above. Course syllabi, community placements, the reflection component, and methods of assessment must sustain rigorous standards for successful implementation of the course(s).
- Service learning has been recognized as a curricular tool for engaging students in their own learning process (Krupar, 1994). Service learning differs from other forms of experiential learning in that it includes the component of critical reflection – faculty and students can work together to discover the most relevant reflection opportunities for enhancing student learning (McKay, 2000). Moreover, students are empowered to have control over what they

learn while those who receive their assistance are empowered to help themselves (Sigmon, 1990).

- Service learning courses have also been included within the Capstone GE Course document. More information will be available at a later date regarding the rigor for submitting course materials; however, the GE Summer and Winter Institutes often feature sessions on writing course proposals for GE Capstone courses including service learning courses. Faculty who engage in this process should be commended for their efforts.

How should this process be documented in the RTP file?

Teaching:

Adopting service learning as a pedagogical tool enhances faculty's teaching effectiveness by:

- Developing more powerful curricula that provides students with a "real world" context for theory and discipline-specific knowledge, thereby helping students to retain more relevant information
- Raising students' awareness about current social issues as they relate to academic areas of interest
- Engaging students in powerful, interactive classroom discussions that invite new perspectives and personal experiences
- Developing students' critical thinking, writing, and interpersonal communication skills
- Helping students learn about the complexities of social injustices and systemic problems
- Increasing awareness of students' community and community needs

Research and Scholarship:

Service learning can enhance faculty's research and scholarship portfolio by:

- Identifying new areas for research and publication, thus increasing opportunities for professional recognition and reward
- Structuring service-learning activities to address larger questions related to instructional effectiveness and/or appropriate outreach models for specific populations
- Measuring the effectiveness of service-learning and discussing the results in the context of a broader subject matter
- Presenting professional papers at state, regional, and national conferences
- Publishing findings in higher education publications or in applied academic journals
- Making this work visible and emphasizing quality

Service:

Service learning can offer faculty the opportunity to serve the university and surrounding community by:

- Participating in the direct service and/or research projects that you students are doing
- Offering your professional skills and expertise to the non-profit agencies where your students are serving
- Serving on the Board of Directors for the non-profit agencies with which you “partner”
- Making service learning presentations to the campus and surrounding communities

Essential and Enhancing Criteria for RTP Review: Where does service learning fit when preparing the RTP file?

Each college within the California State University, Long Beach campus has established criteria for evaluating RTP candidates according to three major areas for review: Teaching, Scholarship, and Service. While there are minor variations between colleges with regard to established criteria for reviewing RTP candidates, generally, non-tenured faculty are evaluated according to *essential and enhancing criteria* in each area. While it may seem obvious to place service learning in the category of service to the university and/or surrounding community, a careful examination of RTP policy documents for each college would challenge such an assumption.

Essential criteria are defined as the nature and level of performance required of all faculty in [the] College. **Enhancing** criteria, by contrast, are aspects of a candidate’s record of accomplishment that go beyond expected performance in terms of quality and quantity (specific definitions of *enhancing* criteria vary to some extent according to college). In all cases, non-tenured faculty members are evaluated in terms of essential and enhancing criteria in the areas of instructionally related activities, research and scholarship, and service.

Instructionally Related Activities

- **What are *essential* criteria for evaluating instructionally related activities?**

Although the areas for evaluating faculty teaching effectiveness do vary, generally, faculty are reviewed according to (1) pedagogy and method, (2) course preparation, (3) expertise, education, and experience; (4) ongoing professional development as a teacher, (5) ongoing professional development in the discipline, and (6) other criteria as appropriate per department; and, in many cases, student responses to teaching effectiveness. Various documents are required in evidence of teaching effectiveness in these areas including course materials (syllabi, handouts, etc.), grade distributions, methods for assessing student learning (process and outcome, knowledge, skills, and abilities,

etc.), and bases for evaluating student learning (weighting of assignments). Given these requirements, faculty who engage in the development and implementation of service learning courses satisfy most, if not all, of the **essential criteria** for instructionally related activities. Participation in the award/workshop series offered by the Community Service Learning Center all but guarantees that the above mentioned criteria will be met. Consider the following:

- *Pedagogy and Method:* Service learning is an innovative instructional method designed to engage students in critical thinking, communication, guided reflection (written and /or oral), and engaging classroom interaction – clearly an innovative pedagogical method for which a growing body of research literature supports its implementation in higher education.
- *Course Preparation:* As previously mentioned, there are rigorous standards imposed on course development. The CSULB campus community supports the participation of faculty with award programs and workshops designed to facilitate course development and implementation. As previously mentioned, faculty who participate in the workshop series sponsored by the Community Service Learning Center receive a minimum of six hours of instruction, the outcome of which is a completed course syllabus and community placement (see Page 3).
- *Expertise, education, and experience:* Not unlike students who enroll in service learning courses, faculty become integrally involved in their community and the community agency with which their students are working. They are constantly in communication with agency representatives, their students, and other individuals involved in the realization of their course. Development of the course requires that faculty are current in their discipline and readily able to identify (1) the needs of the community agency, (2) the way(s) in which their discipline can meet those needs, and (3) the way(s) in which their students are (or will be) prepared to meet the challenges of a “real life” project. Taken together, this requires that faculty increase their expertise in service learning curriculum development, educate themselves with regard to trends in course development and assessment, and participate in the community experience in balance with course objectives.
- *Ongoing professional development as a teacher/in the discipline:* Engaging students in service learning experiences requires that faculty understand the challenges and risks associated with adopting innovative pedagogy. The fact that faculty are motivated to attempt alternative teaching methods should be recognized by their department, college, and the university.
- *Student responses to instruction:* Faculty who adopt innovative pedagogical methods take great risks with regard to students’ reactions to the unfamiliar and challenging. Our hardest critics, students are often remiss to accept what they perceive as additional workload (whether it is or not) or thinking “outside of the box.” At greatest risk, of course, are the acceptable standards for teaching effectiveness set forth in our current student evaluation system and the fact that student evaluations are heavily weighted.

Although our current system of student evaluation falls short of assessing student responses to innovative teaching, items do address teaching effectiveness, relevance of course materials, etc.. Faculty often engage in assessment practices specifically tailored to service learning curriculum (there are resources available in the Community Service Learning Center to assist faculty in developing assessment instruments).

- **What are enhancing criteria for evaluating instructionally related activities?**

The Policy documents for all Colleges at CSULB (with the exception of the College of Engineering that defers to University Documents to define both essential and enhancing criteria for evaluation) specifically identify enhancing criteria in the area of instructionally related activities. In essence, "Enhancing Teaching Activities" include development of innovative approaches, exemplary ways of fostering student learning; outside classroom involvement such as academic advising, field trips, student mentoring, support of student organizations, retention activities; development of new curriculum, instructional programs or material, assessment of instructional activities; offering teaching colloquia or pedagogical workshops. Faculty Librarians are also required to volunteer to work desk hours in addition to those assigned, show evidence of heavy workload, and adopt innovative pedagogical improvements and procedures for providing instructional services to the CSULB community.

Additionally, within the College of Liberal Arts, enhancing criteria are defined according to Teacher-Scholar Teaching Activities that include classroom use of scholarly creative activities, especially peer-reviewed publications or concepts therein by faculty courses at CSULB and elsewhere; publication of widely adopted textbooks; peer-reviewed on teaching outcomes and processes; peer-reviewed publications jointly authored with reference of citation of the candidate's publications in widely adopted textbooks; supervision of students leading to peer-reviewed publications by the students; research projects with supervision of student research or theses; achievements of previous students that the faculty themselves attribute in writing to the candidate (College of Liberal Arts, Evaluation and Recommendation Form, 1997, p. 7).

- In terms of **enhancing criteria for instructionally related activities**, service learning (by definition) is an innovative approach to fostering student learning. Additionally, service learning (by definition) involves students in activities outside of the classroom. Faculty participate in the development of new course materials, reflection activities (papers, journals, in-class discussions, etc.) and often develop additional ways of assessing the wide range of student learning process and outcomes inherent in service learning curriculum (e.g., teaching others, learning by doing, diversity, citizenship, assessment, etc.). The Community Service Learning Center and Center for Faculty Development encourage faculty who have developed and implemented service learning courses to share their experiences with peers. For example, one session devoted to service learning during the GE Summer Institutes 2000 and 2001 included a panel of faculty who had received awards for the support

of service learning curriculum development and who had also taught the resultant courses. In this way, faculties not only share their experiences but they advocate the use of service learning curriculum to their peers.

Scholarly and Creative Activities

- **What are essential criteria for evaluating Scholarly and Creative Activities?**

Generally, all colleges define **essential** criteria for evaluating scholarly and creative activities as maintaining professional currency by engaging in an ongoing program of scholarship and/or creative activity in the discipline, that such activity contributes to the advancement of the discipline as recognized by professional peer review, that such activity (according to the policy document for the College of Business) also be useful to the pedagogy of the discipline, and (according to the policy document for the College of Health and Human Services) that such activity occurs over time (e.g., a well defined program of research and scholarship).

- **What are enhancing criteria for evaluating Scholarly and Creative Activities?**

In essence, **enhancing** criteria are similarly defined as **essential** criteria with the addition of terms such as **substantial, significant**, and in some cases **recognized** to the quality and quantity of activity (although the College of Liberal Arts stipulates that “quantity shall not substitute for quality”). Also included as enhancing criteria are the selection of faculty to editorial assignments with recognized professional publications (e.g., journals, newsletters, or electronic media), selection panels for grant proposal review, fellowships, conference papers, or other adjudication assignments calling for professional expertise. In some cases, scholarly work that contributes to or advances pedagogical method, curricula, or instructional technology is counted among the enhancing criteria for scholarly and creative activities.

- In either case, faculty who engage in scholarly work that explores aspects of service learning – by definition – satisfy both the essential and enhancing criteria for scholarly and creative activities. Additionally, those faculty who serve on editorial boards for service learning journals (e.g., Michigan Journal of Service Learning), selection panels for conference papers (e.g., the National Communication Association (NCA) Division for Experiential Learning in Communication) or other assignments that call for professional expertise satisfy the enhancing criteria for scholarly and creative activity.
- The Community Service Learning Center offers a series of workshops during the Fall and Spring semesters to engage faculty in thoughtful discussion about the potential for programmatic research exploring service learning curriculum. These efforts have the potential to place California State University, Long Beach at the forefront of scholarly work in the area of service learning.

Faculty Service Activities

- **What are essential criteria for evaluating faculty service?**

In most cases, **essential** criteria for faculty service are limited to participation in university governance. However, within the Policy Document of the Colleges of Business Administration, Education, and Health and Human Services, this definition is extended to the community and the discipline. In any case, the activity must “directly involve the academic expertise of the faculty member.” (CBA, Policy Document on RTP, p. 5).

- **What are enhancing criteria for evaluating faculty service?**

Most College Policy Documents advocate the participation of faculty in university governance; however, in most Colleges, community service is characterized as **enhancing rather than essential criteria** for evaluation of faculty service activities. For the College of Business, enhancing criteria extend to consultancies of professional organizations; for the College of Health and Human Services, enhancing criteria extend to consultancies of public schools, local government, and community service organizations. Thus, if faculty in these colleges choose to actively participate in the community project, they can utilize that service in their RTP file as enhancing criteria.

- The Community Service Learning Center has as its advisory body the CSLC Advisory Council. Membership on the council is attained by (1) recognition of the faculty member as interested in service learning curriculum, (2) participation of the faculty member in activities advocating service learning, and (3) expressing interest in serving on the Advisory Council.
- Faculty can also satisfy enhancing criteria in the Colleges of Business Administration and Health and Human Services by acting as consultants to various public agencies (e.g., schools, local government, professional or non-profit organizations).

Summary

Although the institutional purpose of this document is to satisfy requirements of the Learn & Serve Strategic Action Plan, hopefully, this document also demonstrates the need to value, recognize, and reward the work that faculty does with regard to curriculum transformation. To engage in the development and implementation of innovative pedagogy, such as service learning, requires extensive work and high risk to tenure track probationary and tenured faculty. Clearly, the campus community should recognize these efforts by providing the resources and support necessary to succeed and reward these efforts by valuing the work presented during the Retention, Tenure, and Promotion Process.

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