

***FOR ALL PSYCHOLOGY COURSES
STUDENT PACKET FOR SERVICE LEARNING***

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[Note: You can also download this packet from the web site.]

GUIDELINES FOR SERVICE LEARNING

Definition and Goals of Service Learning

***Service Learning** is an educational tool that take students from the classroom into community settings to apply concepts learned in the classroom while providing community service. This is a reciprocal learning experience where you also learn from being in the community organization as well. **Service Learning** benefits both the student and community recipients, and each should learn from the other.*

*The theory underlying **Service Learning** is that we learn most effectively from doing – from being an active participant in the learning process and then critically reflecting on what we have done and learned. It involves active learning – drawing lessons from the experience of performing service work.*

Your service experience also is an opportunity for you to learn about the context in which the service is provided and the connection between the service and your academic course work and your professional growth and development.

Service Learning will provide you with the opportunity to:

- *Learn social responsibility and citizenship skills.*
- *Develop an ethic of service.*
- *Develop civic awareness.*
- *Apply concepts learned in the classroom.*
- *Acquire program development skills.*
- *Develop personality.*
- *Gain academically.*
- *Give something back to the community.*
- *Experience first-hand a potential major field of study.*
- *Establish contacts and possible future employment.*
- *Gain experience which is a prerequisite for many jobs.*

Components of Effective Service-Learning

There are three basic components of effective service-learning:

1. *Sufficient preparation, which includes setting objectives for the skills to be learned or issues to be considered; and includes planning projects so they contribute to learning at the same time that work gets done.*
2. *The act of performing the actual service.*
3. *An analysis of the experience and the lessons learned, along with the sharing of the experience with others as a way to reflect on the experience and its implications. This is a way to identify and absorb what has been learned.*

Thinking about the service also creates a greater understanding of the experience and the way service addresses the needs of the community. It also promotes a concern about community issues and a commitment to be involved as an active citizen.

Outcomes of Service Learning

***Service Learning** then is a connection of theory and practice that puts concepts into concrete form and provides a context for understanding abstract matter. This provides an opportunity to test and refine theories as well as introduce new theories.*

***Service Learning** also uses knowledge with a historical understanding or appreciation of social, economic and environmental implications as well as moral and ethical ramifications of people's actions. This involves a strong use of communication, interpersonal and technical skills.*

***Service Learning** also involves collecting and evaluating data, relating seemingly unrelated matters and ideas; and investigating a self-directed learning which includes inquiry, logical thinking and a relation of ideas and experience. A transference of learning from one context to another will allow for the opportunity to reflect, conceptualize and apply experience-based knowledge.*

Reflection: The Most Critical Aspect of Service Learning

Critical reflection** is an important part of your service learning and is what distinguishes service learning from other forms of experiential education. **The real learning occurs in your reflections.

***Reflection** is a continuous and deliberate process involving analysis, synthesis and disciplined introspective thinking. Reflection is a mirror in which you not only see yourself, but the things that surround you.*

***Reflection** helps you make consistent and strong connections about the community service experience, and the theories and concepts you have learned in class through course materials, readings, lectures, and discussions.*

***Reflection** should include your attempt to think about how the Service Learning experience was beneficial to you and others. Furthermore, in your reflecting, you should think about how the experience helped you understand your role and responsibility to your community, nation, and world.*

Reflective tools include:

- *Keeping a Journal*
- *Discussion or Case Studies*
- *Portfolios - Paper or Digital*
- *Development of Web Sites*
- *Photographic Essays or Journals*
- *Symposiums*
- *In-Class Presentations*

Your reflective narrative is a major component of your grade. The guiding questions listed below are designed to help you with your thinking and presentation.

Guiding Questions for Service Experience

Listed below are the specific questions that should guide your thinking, planning, development, and the outcomes of your service experience. Answers to these questions should be included in your written report:

Preparation for Identifying a SL Site

- *If you plan to do Service Learning, you are required to purchase and read the book **Building Bridges: The Allyn & Bacon Student Guide to Service Learning** by Doris M. Hamner, (2002). You can find this publication in the Campus Bookstore.*
- *You are encouraged to identify and contact sites early. You must have chosen your site no later than October 31st in the Fall Semester and February 28th in the Spring Semester.*
- *Decide on whether you want to do Service Learning independently or work with a group or team.*
- *In planning your Service Learning experience, you should attempt to identify human service needs that are not being adequately met by an existing institution or organization. (Contact the Loudoun County Office of Volunteer Services or Volunteer Fairfax for assistance, if needed. See course syllabus.)*
- *In planning your Service Learning experience, you can also identify human service needs that are not being adequately met that educate and inform the public, through public campaigns, web sites, information sessions and more.*
- *What are the criteria for selection of your site?*
- *How is this site specifically related to the field of psychology?*
- *What skills would you like to develop from this experience?*
- *How will you negotiate entry to your selected site (e.g., initial phone contact, in person appointment, etc.)?*
- *What will you include in your letter of introduction?*
- *Once the selected SL organization has granted permission, will you develop a statement of agreement to present to the administrator or designated point of contact?*
- *When you are given permission to implement a special program or project, will you present a written proposal, plan of action, or overview?*

While Performing the Service

- *What is your major study question(s)?*
- *What specific theories and concepts from the course can you apply to your service learning experience?*
- *What specific theories, concepts, or skills learned in your psychology course(s) did you apply to recipients in the Service Learning setting?*
- *What did you contribute to the learning and understanding of others.*
- *What lessons did you learn from the experience?*
- *What was the expressed or stated impact of your service on the organization?
(Note: You should receive feedback from the organization's administrator in your exit interview. You should also distribute and pick up the evaluation form during the exit interview.)*
- *Are there any particular careers in psychology related to this experience?*
- *Was service learning an effective way to make class material more meaningful? Why?*
- *Was there anything you did not like about the Service Learning experience? State these specifically?*
- *What are the implications of your experience in this setting? Can you transfer this knowledge to your life and other professional experiences?*
- *As a result of this experience, how did you grow, mature or change? How do you see yourself making future contributions to your community, nation, and world?*

Organizational Expectations

An agency may expect some of the following from student volunteers:

- *Promptness.*
- *Being responsible.*
- *Regular attendance.*
- *Willingness to stay for the duration of a shift.*
- *A positive attitude and an attitude of service.*
- *Respect toward the organization's environment.*
- *Fulfillment of duties and responsibilities.*
- *Feedback on the appropriateness of assigned task(s).*
- *Openness to learn about other cultures and groups.*
- *Asking intelligent questions that allow you to learn the true nature of the organization's work and mission.*

Service Learning Evaluation

Your professor will make an assessment of your service learning using some of the following criteria:

- *Relationship of the setting to psychology and course content.*
- *Written reflections on service experience.*
- *Level and quality of the work performed or program implemented.*
- *Whether student connects service experience with psychology content and theories.*
- *Whether the service experience demonstrates learning by the student.*
- *The format in which the service project is displayed and presented.*
- *Whether the report includes a verification that the student was in the setting.*
- *Includes evaluation of the experience by the student and the organization.*
- *Includes other essential components as outlined on student requirements and checklist.*

Student Requirements and Checklist

- *Eight (8) or more hours of community service in a psychology related organization.*
- *The development and implementation of a program proposed by you for the organization or a project designated specifically for you by the organization.*
- *A letter of understanding written by you and given to the administrator of the site once you have negotiated entry and received approval to do service. This letter should indicate the specific service contributions you will provide as agreed upon between you and the organization's administrator. A copy of this letter should be included in your final report submitted to your instructor.*
- *Maintaining a journal of your activities and reflections while in the site, including your first and daily impressions, your responsibilities and activities, reactions to your presence in the setting, and your contributions to the recipients of service. Your journal can be a combination of written and photographic or video-recorded essay.*
- *Completion of evaluation form by the student.*
- *Completion of evaluation form by the organization.*
- *Submission of written verification from an administrator in the setting in which you do service to be included in your final written report. This letter should be written on the organization's official stationery and include the dates and time you provided service as well as the total number of hours contributed. This letter should be signed by an official of the organization, with title. Place letter as an appendix to your final report.*
- *Submit a final written report on your service experience with reflection and analysis of the experience, answering the questions outlined above. This report may also include attachments such as the organization's brochure and other information, or photographs of your experiences and activities in the setting. These may be attached in the Appendix*

or as part of your paper. All reports are to be typewritten and presented formally with a cover page, etc. Reports should be 5 to 10 pages in length.

- *You are required to make a presentation to the class of your service experience. You should also address other issues such as placement problems, disappointments, and integration of service with readings, classroom discussion and lectures.*

Rating Form for Service Learning Projects

Name: _____
Title of Project: _____
SL Site: _____
Contact Person: _____

PREPARATION - (10 Points)

- ____ Project is well planned and organized. (2.5 Points)
____ Student performs service in psychology related setting. (5 Points)
____ Student provides service that meet needs of organization. (2.5 Points)
 [____ Service determined by organization.]
 [____ Service proposed & designed by student.]

Total Points _____

PERFORMANCE OF SERVICE - (45 Points)

- ____ Student indicates specific study question(s). (10 Points)
____ Student maintains journal while in site.
 Journal notes included in appendices of report. (10 Points)
____ Student performs at minimum 8-10 hours of community service. (10 Points)
____ Student performs more than 8-10 hours of community service. (15 Points)

Total Points _____

FINAL WRITTEN REPORT-(45 Points)

Service Learning Report Form:
____ Portfolio ____ Written Narrative ____ Digital ____ Website ____
Photographic Essay ____ Video Production ____ Other (specify: _____)

- ____ Student states specific contribution made to the learning of those in the setting. (10 Points)
____ Student includes section with critical reflections of the experience. (25 Points)
 ____ Student discusses specific personal and professional growth as result of service. (5)
 ____ Student discusses how the SL experience linked to course content, theories and concepts. (10)
 ____ Student discusses transference of knowledge to life and professional experiences and contributions to personal growth. (5)
 ____ Student discusses future implications of SL experience to self, community, nation, and world. (5)
____ Report includes letter of verification from administrator of site where service was rendered on official letterhead. (10 Points)

Total Points _____

Comments:

Overall Total Points and Final Grade: _____

Name _____

For All Psychology Courses - Dr. Rosalyn M. King

STUDENT EVALUATION OF SERVICE LEARNING

If you are a student who did service learning as your final project for this course, please take a few minutes and provide your assessment of the experience. This will help me determine whether this experience is a valuable instructional strategy as well as how to maximize future experiential learning projects for students.

1. Please provide the name, location and type of organization where you did your service learning ?

2. How many hours of service did you provide to the organization?
Total number of hours: _____

3. How many times were you in the setting? _____ Weekly? _____ Monthly? _____
Daily? _____

4. What did you do in the setting?

5. Did you develop your own service project or worked on as assigned project as stipulated by the organization?
a) Developed my own project b) Worked on assigned project c) Other (please specify)

6. If you developed your own project, please describe briefly.

7. Do you consider service learning a worthwhile learning process?
a) yes b) no c) somewhat
In what ways or why not? _____

8. What specific skills did you acquire or improve as a result of your service learning experience?

9. What did you like best about service learning?

10. What did you like least about service learning?

11. Were you able to relate your service learning to content learned in your psychology course?
a) Yes b) No

In what specific ways could you relate the SL to Psychology content; or, why were you not able to relate SL to psychology content? _____

12. How would you rate your field experience as a valuable learning tool?
a) Excellent b) Very Good c) Good d) Fair e) Poor

13. Please provide any additional comments you would like to make about your learning experience.
(Use back of page if necessary.)

FORMS FOR THE ORGANIZATION WHERE SERVICE IS TO BE PERFORMED

1. Please provide the handout on service learning to the administrator at the time you deliver your letter of understanding or at your first contact with the organization.
2. Please distribute the evaluation form some time before you leave the setting , allowing the organization time to complete it and collect it during the exit interview.

**SERVICE LEARNING IN PSYCHOLOGY AT
NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE ON THE LOUDOUN CAMPUS**

For the Organizational Recipient

What Is Service Learning?

Service Learning is one of the many options students can choose from to fulfill course requirements in psychology. Instead of doing the traditional research paper, students can choose to perform, at minimum, 8 hours of community service.

Service learning is a method by which students improve academic learning and develop personal and professional skills through structured service projects that meet community needs. Service learning is integrated into the psychology curriculum and we attempt to facilitate learning by creating opportunities for students to understand and analyze their service experiences in the context of their course work. Therefore, service learning is an opportunity for students to enrich their experiences and apply knowledge learned in the classroom in applied settings. It involves active learning - drawing lessons from the experience of performing service work.

Service learning also provides students with the opportunity to learn social and civic responsibility and develop an ethic of service.

Components of Effective Service Learning

There are three basic components of effective service learning:

1. Sufficient preparation, which includes setting objectives for the skills to be learned or issues to be considered; and, includes planning projects so they contribute to learning at the same time that work gets done.
2. The act of performing the actual service.
3. An analysis of the experience and the lessons learned, along with the sharing of the experience with others as a way to reflect on the experience and its implications. This is a way to identify and absorb what has been learned.

For the student, thinking about the service also creates a greater understanding of the experience and the way service addresses the needs of the community. It also promotes a concern about community issues and a commitment to be involved as an active citizen.

Outcomes of Service Learning

Service learning is an experiential education approach that should be a reciprocal learning experience for the student and the organization. Learning flows from the service activities and should be mutually beneficial for those who provide service and the recipients of service.

Thank you for giving our students the opportunity to have a meaningful and reflective experience in your organization.

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RECIPIENT'S EVALUATION OF SERVICE LEARNING

As the organizational recipient of an NVCC student's Service Learning assignment, please take a few minutes to provide your comments and assessment of the experience for your organization and for the student. This will help us determine whether this experience is a valuable instructional strategy, as well as how to maximize the experiences for the student and the organization in the future. Please also make sure that the student receives a letter of verification on your official letterhead signed by the appropriate official. We sincerely appreciate and value your participation, support, and input.

1. Please name the student(s) who performed service in your organization?

2. Please describe the nature of your organization?

3. Did the student(s) implement a program designed by him/her or perform duties designated by the organization?
 - a) Implemented own program b) Performed designated duties c) Other (Please specify)

4. In your opinion, do you believe the student(s) learned from their service experience?
 - a) Yes b) Somewhat c) No

Please explain your answer:

5. How would you rate the student's contribution to the overall goals and mission of your organization?
 - a) Excellent b) Very Good c) Good d) Fair e) No contribution made

6. How would you rate the impact the student had on your organization?
 - a) Very significant b) Moderately significant c) No significant impact

7. How did your organization benefit from the service performed?

8. Please make any comments you wish to make about the student, the service provided or about the significance or impact of service learning on your organization.

Person Completing Evaluation: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____ Date: _____