

Getting Started With Service-Learning at Paradise Valley Community College

BRAINSTORMING:

Step One: Think about whether or not there is a relevant service experience that can be linked to your course competencies or objectives?

- Ø What course(s) do you teach?

- Ø In which course(s) do you see a possible connection?

Step Two: Describe one or more competencies or objectives in your chosen course that you think a service-learning project would be an effective method for teaching and learning.

- Ø List the competencies or objectives?

- Ø What type of service project would be an ideal match for teaching the above course competency? What would you want students to do and why?

- Ø Will you participate with your students? Will you spend anytime with the students at the site(s)? Will you do any observing?

- Ø What type of agency would you want your students to work with? (Ask your service-learning coordinator?)

- Ø How many agencies would participate in your project? Would you allow student to go to one or more agencies? Would they all go to one type of agency? (i.e. schools)?

- Ø Would you or the students pick the agency?

- Ø Would you or the service-learning coordinator contact a particular agency and set-up a meeting?
- Ø How many hours of service would the project require to meet the learning objective? (20-30hours?) Would the students need to serve at the agency over a period of time (1-3 month?)

PLANNING:

Step One: Decide how many courses/sections/students you want to involve in service learning and when.

- Ø Consider what time of day you teach. Will this have an impact on the project and students' involvement? (i.e. evening course?)
- Ø Will you offer this service-learning project to students as an option or will it be required? (Ask your service-learning coordinator about advantages and disadvantages of both.)
- Ø Consider how many sections you want to begin with and how many students will be involved. Maybe you should *pilot* the service-learning project or start with one class with a small number of students. If the service-learning project is successful, then add more sections later.
- Ø Would the project occur outside of or during class time? Are you willing to give up class time so students can accomplish projects? **Remember:** This is not an add-on to your course but a substitute for another project.
- Ø Will students participate in groups? If so how many in each group? As a whole class? Individually?
- Ø What product will result from the experience? How will the project be presented at the end of the course? (How heavily will it be weighed in your course?)

Ø How will you grade students' project? If a group project, how will individual participation be assessed or evaluated? Consider using performance-based rubrics?

Step Two: Locate your service-learning coordinator or other faculty on campus that have required service-learning in their courses.

Ø What kind of support do you need to implement the project? For example, consider what help you need in finding an agency, making contacts, complying with district legal policies, establishing accountability produces for both students and community partners.

Ø What will the reflection component entail? (A written journal?)

Ø Who on your campus can you contact for support?

CHECKING:

Step One: After thinking through your project and plans, review your original goals of teaching some aspect of your course through service-learning methodology?

Ø Verify the relevancy and clear connection between the service-learning project and your curricular objectives for competencies. Simply put, why would service-learning be a more effective way of teaching this concept than a traditional method? (Will it provide more hands-on experience?)

Step Two: Be Proactive: begin thinking in terms of how to handle any obstacles that may develop throughout the semester.

Ø Decide if your plan is too complicated, requiring you to go to many agencies over many days and different time periods. Is the service-learning project manageable for you? Will the grading of the projects be time consuming?

Ø What if students begin to complain? What will your response be? (At first, students will complain about the hours but after it is completed, they will thank you for it.)

Ø What will you do if students do not finish their projects or required hours?

REMEMBERING:

Step One: Once you have decided to incorporate service-learning into your curriculum, be sure to include it in your course materials from the start. Talk to students about the project on the first day of class; include a service-learning section in your syllabus; let students know **WHY** you've chosen this pedagogy and what your expectations are for them and the project.

Ø If at all possible, show them an example of what you are expecting. For example, if you want them to do a poster, show them a poster and what you are expecting on the poster.

WHAT'S NEXT:

Build on your experience and learn more about how you can make the service-learning project more successful next time.

Ø Should you redefine the required hours; project; community partners?

Ø Did the reflection component meet your expectations?

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