

Service-Learning



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What is Service-Learning?

Service-learning is a pedagogical model that intentionally integrates academic learning with community service in a credit-bearing academic course. Students participate in an authentic service activity that meets needs identified by the community partner (designed within the framework of a mutually beneficial relationship) and critically reflect on that activity. Thus, students gain a deeper understanding of course content and a commitment to socially responsible citizenship, and they develop skills and understanding needed to contribute to civic well-being.



Students who engage the community through service often discover that they become the recipients of wonderful gifts.

SERVICE-LEARNING INTEGRATES ACADEMIC LEARNING AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Service-learning is a form of public engagement and experiential learning. This pedagogical model intentionally integrates education and community service within a credit-bearing academic course.

Students “learn to serve and serve to learn” by participating in authentic service activities that meet the needs identified by a community partner.

Faculty members play an integral role in service-learning endeavors, using service activities to enrich courses through the interaction of practical experience and academic theory. Their involvement allows service to come alive for their students.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Agapé Center for Service and Learning develops, administers, facilitates, and coordinates programs of service-learning, community service, and mission, contributing to the mission of Messiah College to “educate men and women toward maturity of intellect, character, and Christian faith in preparation for lives of service, leadership, and reconciliation in church and society.” Students, faculty, and staff work with community-based partners in local, national, and international settings to address community needs, to provide holistic learning opportunities for students, and to encourage students toward an ethic of discipleship, service, and civic engagement.

What Can Students Gain from Service-Learning?

- Greater understanding of concepts and skills studied in the classroom
- Hands-on experience
- Deeper vocational identity, spiritual worldview, and leadership development
- Critical cultural and spiritual commitments
- Applied understanding of their civic engagement responsibilities
- Deeper, life-long commitments to justice, reconciliation, and love for their neighbors
- Opportunity to ground theory in meaningful practice

What Can Faculty Gain from Service-Learning?

- New holistic opportunities to engage students with educational objectives
- Personal satisfaction in knowing their students are making a difference in their communities
- A renewed challenge in understanding and applying the subject they are teaching
- New competencies in applying a unique, respected, and valued pedagogy
- Recognition and resources through research and application grants
- Publication opportunities for applying service-learning pedagogy

What Resources are Available for Faculty?

- Service-learning grants
- Assistance with course development (i.e., syllabus construction, student placement, directed reflections, project logistics, etc.)
- Agapé Center Service-Learning Library
- Assistance with managing students, locations, and hours served
- Information about service opportunities in every academic major
- Faculty development opportunities—workshops and seminars
- Biennial national faith-based service-learning conference hosted at Messiah College
- The Agapé Center resource website: www.messiah.edu/agape

“Hopefully I am *encouraging* long-term workers and living love. This trip has served as an encouragement to me as I see long-term workers and hear their *stories of ministry...*”

—Angelina Hein '09

EXAMPLES OF HOW STUDENTS SERVE

- Painting a school, including mural art
- Constructing new Compassion International classroom facilities
- Serving as summer interns to help receive teams for short-term projects
- Assisting with Vacation Bible School/Children's Programs
- Teaching English
- Providing ministry to youth
- Serving as a house family in an orphanage
- Building cross-cultural relationships
- Assisting in AIDS clinics
- Constructing houses

SERVICE-LEARNING GRANTS

Faculty Service-Learning Grant

This grant is designed to encourage faculty to integrate service-learning into courses. The grant can be used for a faculty stipend and/or course-related expenses.

Student Service-Learning Grant

This grant allows qualified juniors or seniors to work for a semester or a full year as an apprentice for a faculty member who offers a significant service-learning course. The amount of the grant is \$450 per semester. Scholar intern proposals may be included as part of another grant proposal or may be submitted independently. The activities undertaken by a student intern will vary according to the needs of the project, but the time commitment of the intern should not exceed 75 hours per semester.

Faculty Grant Maximum Amount	\$1,050
<i>Number available: 2</i>	

Student Scholar Intern Grant	\$450
<i>Number available: 3</i>	



Whether alone or in groups, students can meaningfully engage in learning through service.

SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM

[Approved Community of Educators Senate, 04/02/2007]

The Faculty Dialogues Project culminated three years of work with a proposal to formalize service-learning across campus. This proposal was unanimously passed at the Community of Educators Senate on April 2, 2007, creating a new Service-Learning governance committee that will encourage the development of, and participation in, service-learning experiences campus wide.

The main components of the new Service-Learning Program are as follows:

I. Definitions and Perspectives

“Service-Learning.” A pedagogical model that intentionally integrates academic learning with community service in a credit-bearing academic course. Students participate in an authentic service activity that meets needs identified by the community (designed within the framework of a mutually beneficial relationship) and critically reflect on that activity. Thus, students gain a deep understanding of course content, a commitment to socially responsible citizenship, and develop skills and understanding needed to contribute to civic well-being.

“Learning-Guided Community Service.” Learning-Guided Community Service is a noncredit-bearing activity where students, educators, and staff volunteer in a service that meets community needs. Although the primary emphasis is on service, Learning-Guided Community Service differs from “community service” in that it recognizes that much learning can occur for those serving when proper training and reflection is completed. Intentionality in purpose, placement, effective service outcomes, and applied holistic learning outcomes in relationship with the community partner remain a priority.

II. Service-Learning Course Parameters and Criteria

Approved service-learning courses will incorporate the following general parameters and components. The Service-Learning Committee will use these criteria to approve curricula and evaluate service activities.

General Service-Learning Parameters. Incorporates nationally established and recognized best practices in each service-learning course.

Criteria:

1. Awards academic credit
2. Requires educator orientation and training in the pedagogies and best practices of service-learning
3. Incorporates research and theory from experiential/contextual learning and service-learning in course design and delivery
4. Provides evaluation and feedback for students

Components. Approved service-learning courses incorporate the following components:

Content Component. Service readings and activities will relate service to the course objectives.

Criteria:

- a. Introduces students to research problems and community partnerships that address a significant need in our community, region, country, or the world
- b. Prepares students for service by studying theories and gaining academic knowledge relevant to the problem
- c. Prepares students for service by orienting them to the problem and the context in which they will work
- d. Uses readings and discussions to connect learning to College-Wide Educational Objectives

Service Component. The service assignment addresses a significant need in context. Students will satisfy the service requirement by choosing from a variety of activities approved by the Director of the Agapé Center for Service and Learning and by the faculty member teaching the course.

Criteria:

- a. Provides opportunities for students to express value commitments and disciplinary knowledge in an authentic, real-life setting
- b. Enables students to personally connect with people involved with the issue to which the service is directed. Ideally, this will include a relationship with persons directly affected.
- c. Relates to programs with long-term commitments to the communities and issues they address
- d. Includes sufficient contact time and duration to allow students to build relationships with people facing the issue and to develop deep understanding

Reflection Component. This incorporates structured reflection activities that relate the student’s major and service experience to Christian discipleship and vocation.

Criteria:

- a. Includes students, faculty, and community partners
- b. Requires written and oral reflection activities
- c. Critically analyzes the theories, structures, and assumptions of students’ academic disciplines in the context of the service experience
- d. Helps students to link their values and academic learning to other parts of the curriculum and cocurriculum
- e. Encourages students to evaluate their personal values and commitments, and to grow in discipleship and toward a mature Christian faith
- f. Helps students develop a theological understanding of vocation that enables them to contextualize their faith

III. Types and Classifications of Service-Learning Courses

Any course approved as a service-learning course by the Service-Learning Committee will be identified in the course schedule. In some instances, service-learning will be an essential aspect of the course and hence will be approved and permanently cataloged as a service-learning course.

There are three types of service-learning courses that would receive a service-learning attribute:

A. **Discipline-Based Courses:** Courses that are initiated by and housed in respective academic departments. There are two types of discipline-based service-learning courses:

1. Those **permanently** designated within the discipline
2. Those **selectively** designated for a given semester.
These courses or sections are developed by faculty and are approved by the department chair and the Service-Learning Committee for a given semester.

B. **Free-Standing IDS Courses:** Courses initiated by the General Education Committee and housed either in the department or in General Education. There are two types of IDS service-learning courses:

1. Those **permanently** designated within General Education
2. Those **selectively** designated for a given semester.
These courses are developed by faculty and are approved by the General Education Committee and the Service-Learning Committee for a given semester.

C. **Free-Standing Service-Learning (“SERV”) Courses.**

Courses initiated by the Director of the Agapé Center for Service and Learning, approved by the Service-Learning and Curriculum Committees, and housed in the Agapé Center for Service and Learning.

1. The content of these courses is focused more specifically on themes of service, social justice, development, and mission. A required service activity meets community-identified needs;
2. Example: SERV 231/232: Foundation of Service, Mission and Social Change (approved in 1989).

2. **Recommending Functions**

- a. Develop a philosophy of service-learning, including foundational definitions (Academic Council, COE Senate)
- b. Develop parameters and criteria for service-learning courses (Academic Council, COE Senate)
- c. Develop programming in which service-learning plays a central role (Appropriate Standing Committees as needed, COE Senate)

3. **Action Functions**

- a. Encourage service-learning curriculum/course development across the disciplines
- b. Advise the director of the Agapé Center for Service and Learning on ways to facilitate and enhance the service-learning program
- c. Coordinate campus-wide service-learning scholarship, research, and assessment efforts
- d. Approve service-learning courses using approved service-learning parameters and criteria
- e. Approve student and faculty applications for service-learning scholarship and grant opportunities
- f. Create and organize faculty development opportunities to increase awareness and understanding of service-learning across the disciplines
- g. Conduct periodic reviews of institutional service-learning policies and procedures
- h. Conduct campus-wide reviews that assess the progress of institutionalizing service-learning in the curriculum
- i. Develop guidelines that satisfy service-learning requirements for departments or individual students with unique circumstances

IV. **Formalizing Service-Learning at Messiah College**

A. **Service-Learning Committee**

Service-learning programming will be administered by a Community of Educators Service-Learning Standing Committee housed in the Agapé Center. The purpose of this committee will be to work with the Director of the Agapé Center to give leadership to campus-wide service-learning.

1. **Membership**

- a. Director of the Agapé Center for Service and Learning, Chair (ex);
- b. Dean of External Programs (ex officio);
- c. Associate Dean of General Education and Common Learning (ex officio);
- d. A minimum of one faculty representative from each of the schools, appointed by the Director of the Agapé Center in consultation with the school dean and the provost;
- e. Appointed members will serve three-year staggered terms.



Service-Learning puts theory into practice for students locally, nationally, and internationally.

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Course Cultivates Foundational Understanding of Service, Mission, and Social Change

Foundations of Service, Mission, and Social Change (SERV 231/2) offers students a unique opportunity to relate classroom learning with everyday experiences. The course focuses on service and mission — both as a central motivation for all that students are and do, and as the call from God to provide personal and social care and share the good news of Jesus with neighbors.

The course combines the academic study of the mission of the church in the world with a summer experiential service-learning activity. The course draws on perspectives from sociology, theology, missions, and concepts of service-learning in a discussion-oriented classroom setting.

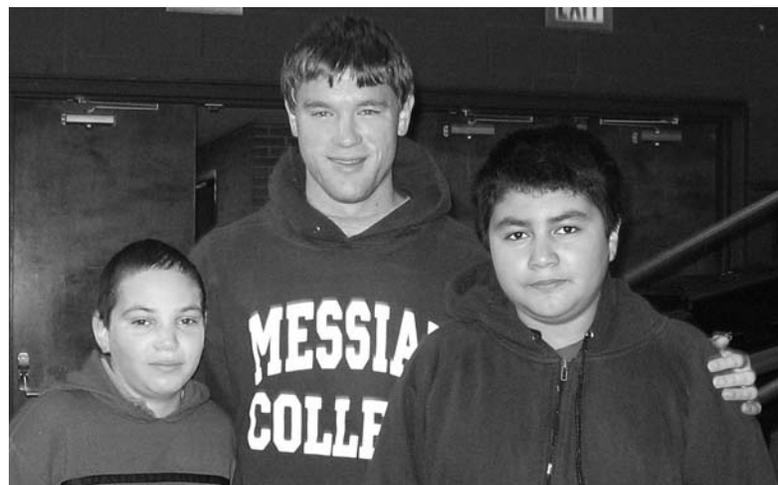
Spring semester is a traditional, three-credit course in preparation for a summer service project.

During the summer, students serve with a mission or service agency in the United States or abroad, putting into practice and testing what they have learned.

Fall semester is a one-credit course where students reflect on and learn from their summer experiences. Through the in-depth reporting of their observations and activities, students consequently link their reflections with ideas and concepts studied during the spring semester.

"Service-learning can provide indispensable opportunities for students to connect faith, community, culture, and environment in the development of their senses of self and place."

—Erik D. Lindquist, Ph.D., associate professor of biology and environmental science



Top: Messiah students introduce Migrant Education students to the college experience through a 2-day overnight retreat on campus. Middle: Jeff Waters '08 serving in Northern Ireland. Bottom: Professor Erik Lindquist looks for creative ways to integrate service into his biology courses.

2006–2007 Service-learning program

24	Classes involving service-learning
18	Service-learning professors from all five schools
382	Students in service-learning classes

National and International Individual Grants Program Summary Report 06–07

Once again this was another successful year in offering grants, training, and reflection for a number of students who plan to participate in a summer mission experience. As the students returned in the fall of 2006 from their summer experiences, we heard a number of amazing stories about what they experienced and how they grew over the summer. Then we spent the entire year with students who were looking for similar experiences in the summer of 2007.

Grants Offered

Student Summer Missions Endowment Fund—

This is funding of \$2,100 split among up to four people to be used to assist with their trip expenses.

World Christian Fellowship Grant—funding raised from their fall Canoe-a-thon event and from their budget. This funding could range from \$3,000–\$7,500 and is split between a number of applicants who need assistance with their trip expenses.

Mulberry Grant—This is an annual gift of \$30,000 from the Mulberry Foundation. Ten individuals receive \$3,000 each toward their fall tuition to make up for lost summer income by participating in summer missions. They must be on-site for at least four weeks.

Frey Endowment Grant—This endowment provides roughly \$12,500 annually. This is distributed to a small number of students to be applied to their fall tuition to make up for lost summer income. They must be on-site for at least eight weeks.



Philanthropy involves both monetary gifts and gifts of service. Through the Agapé Center grants program, students are able to give their summers to service in the church and society.

Individual Grants Program at a Glance

Summer 2006

Grants	28 recipients received a total of \$51,670 in grant aid
Service-Learning Class	19 participants committing to at least eight weeks of national or international service

Summer 2007

Grants	75 recipients received a total of \$52,100 in grant aid
Service-Learning Class	31 participants committing to at least eight weeks of national or international service

Where students served	2006 — 19 different countries 2007 — 32 different countries
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How many different organizations	2006 — 25 organizations 2007 — 46 organizations
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Total hours for grant recipients	27,056 hours
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AGAPÉ CENTER

For Service And Learning



Service-Learning



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SERVICE AND LEARNING

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