



Center for Community Engagement
and Service Learning

Service Learning Course (SLC) Designation Overview

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Conceptual & Practical Criteria for Service Learning Course (SLC) Designation

The Value of Service Learning

Service-learning combines community-based experiences, academic instruction, and structured reflection. While the emphasis and intensity put on each of these three components may vary from course environment to course environment, each component must be clearly identified in order to have a Service Learning Course (SLC) Designation.

When designed and implemented appropriately (adhering to the criteria in the next section), service-learning can provide educative environments where:

- Information from a variety of contexts can be integrated;
- Complex problems can be presented and addressed;
- Effective communication can be practiced amongst a variety of constituents;
- Habits of civic engagement can be developed and applied;
- A student's personal purpose and values can be explored, clarified, and acted upon.

The Conceptual Criteria

In order to receive the SLC designation, the following *Conceptual Criteria* must be clearly met:

- **LEARNING CONNECTION** – The syllabus must show direct and intentional connections between the community-based experiences and the course content.
 - *Test: Are the learning goals and community-based experience goals integrated in an organized and clear way?*
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** – The relevant community-based experience must have a sufficient intensity and duration to produce meaningful learning outcomes and meet the learning objectives of the course.
 - *Test: Does the community-based experience meet a public good? How?*
 - *Test: Considering the level of the course and educative purpose of the community-based experience is the intensity and duration appropriate?*
- **REFLECTION METHOD** – Include clear reflection mechanisms that provide students the opportunity to link their community-based experiences to course content and their personal worldview or values.
 - *Test: Are students required to make connections across course content and personal values?*

The Practical Criteria

Once the *Conceptual Criteria* are met and a course is approved, three *Practical Criteria* must also be met:

- Within the syllabus, the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning's contact information must be provided in a SLC designated course and must also be clearly identified as a resource for students.
- WCU's (Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning) definition of service-learning must be included within the SLC designated course's syllabus.
- An SLC assessment instrument must be administered as well. The assessment (Qualtrics) will be emailed to SLC designated faculty members in mid-November (for fall SLC's) and in mid-April (for spring SLC's). The responses will need to be submitted by the end of the fall and spring semesters, respectively.

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