



Center for
Service Learning

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

Service Learning Course (SLC) Designation Packet

WCU Center for Service Learning
273 Belk Building
Phone: 828.227.7184
Fax: 828.227.7179

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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:

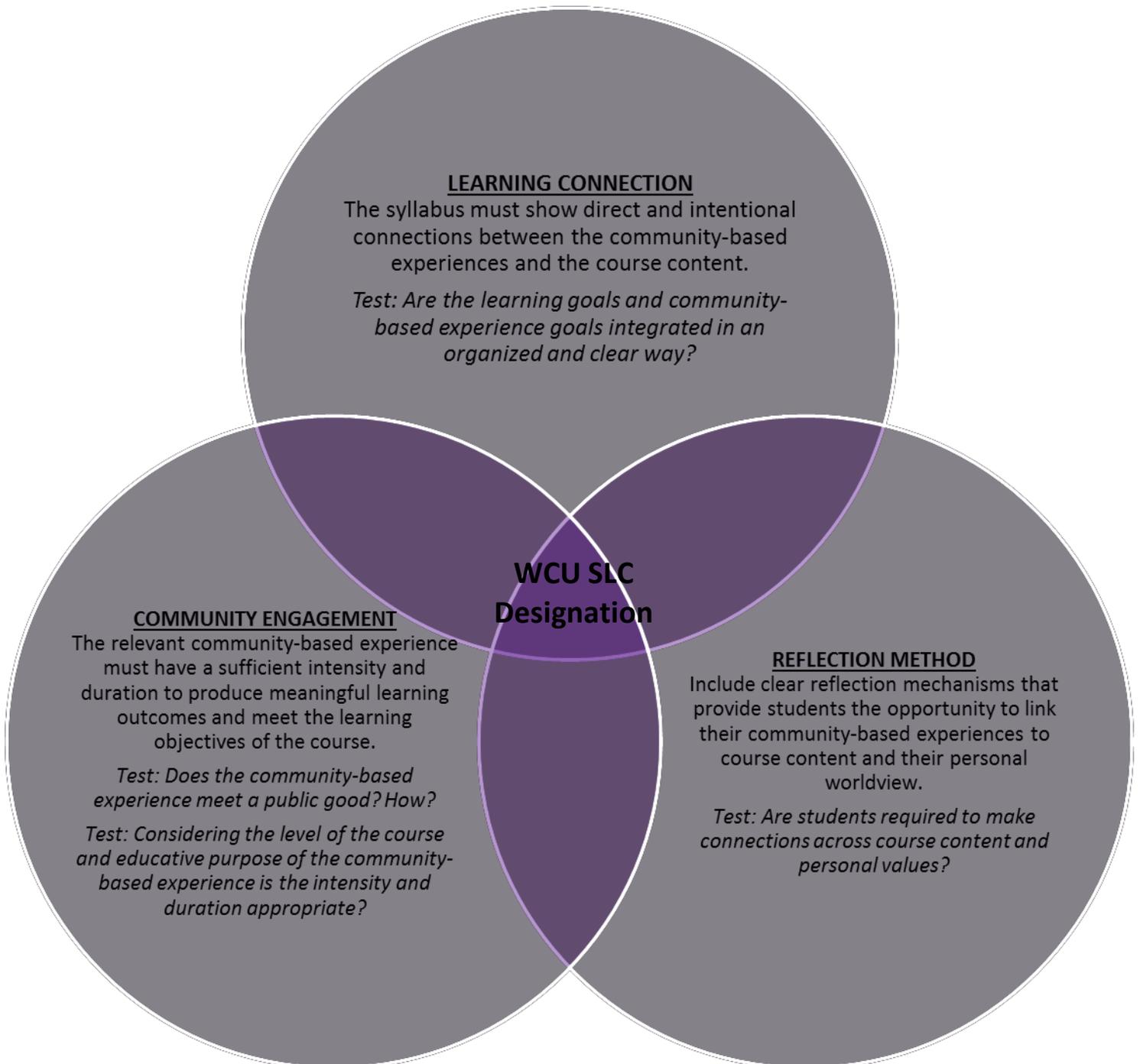
- Within the syllabus, the Center for Service Learning's contact information must be provided in a SLC designated course and must also be clearly identified as a resource for students.
- WCU's (Center for Service Learning) definition of service-learning must be included within the SLC designated course's 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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Conceptual Criteria for Service Learning Course (SLC) Designation



*Process Leading to Service Learning Course (SLC) Designation

1. Contact and discuss

SLC concept with Center for Service-Learning staff.

Determine if criteria can be met and the logistics involved.

(2-4 weeks)

2. Complete and submit

SLC designation application form along with service-learning course syllabus.

March 1 (for fall & summer)

October 1 (for spring)

3. Expedited review completed for renewals and first-time applications by Center for Service Learning staff and SLC designation committee.

-NO, CHANGES = Approved

-YES, CHANGES = Back to faculty for edits

(1-2 weeks)

**SLC designations are approved for a 2-year window. If your course curriculum or teaching method changes, please let the Center for Service Learning know.*



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Application for Service Learning Course Designation

Please send a hard copy of this application form and your syllabus to the Center for Service Learning (Belk 273). The deadline for fall and summer approval is March 1 and the deadline for spring approval is October 1.

Check one: New Course Renewal

Instructor's Name: _____

Title and Department: _____

Campus Address: _____

Phone: _____ **Email:** _____

Semester(s) & Year Offered: Fall Spring Summer Year _____

Course Prefix, Number, Section, and Title: _____

Number of Credit Hours Assigned: _____

Estimated Number of Hours of Community Engaged Service over the Semester (per student): _____

Expected Enrollment: _____

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Signature of Department Head: _____

Signature of Dean: _____

<p>Date: _____</p> <p>Committee Approval/Recommendations: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>1. Learning Process Criteria: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>2. Community Engagement Criteria: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>3. Reflection Method Criteria: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(*for internal use only)</p>
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