

**Master Syllabus**

**Course:**

**Cluster Requirement: 5B**

This University Studies Master Syllabus serves as a guide and standard for all instructors teaching an approved course in the University Studies program. Individual instructors have full academic freedom in teaching their courses, but as a condition of course approval, agree to focus on the outcomes listed below, to cover the identified material, to use these or comparable assignments as part of the course work, and to make available the agreed-upon artifacts for assessment of learning outcomes.

**Course Overview:**

This proposal is different in that we are requesting 5B approval for all courses designated as service-learning courses. Since service-learning is a pedagogical method that may be used by some faculty and not other OR that may be used in one class or semester and not another, we propose that the Assistant Provost Director of the Leduc Center for Civic Engagement serve as the clearing house and keeper of record for these classes.

Service-learning can be used in any discipline and any course. The Assistant Provost has trained faculty and collected service-learning data on student outcomes and retention for the past 5 years.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Course-Specific Learning Outcomes:

This is not a course specific application. It is an application to approve all service-learning designated classes within Cluster 5B.

**Service Learning** is a pedagogical method used in credit bearing courses that is designed with the dual mission of:

*a)* Student attainment of discipline specific knowledge through creatively designed active learning community based projects and

*b)* Community benefit through the thoughtful identification and completion of community-based service.

The methodology of Service Learning requires:

*a)* A clear link between academic objectives and service experience that is mutually beneficial to the goals of the course and community need.

*b)* Student reflection as a means to gain a greater understanding of course content and a broader sense of civic responsibility.

Reflections should....

a) Clearly link service experience to course content and objectives

b) Occur regularly

c) Get feedback from instructor

d) Include the opportunity for students to explore values and civic participation

University Studies Learning Outcomes:

The methodology of service-learning is in line with University area 5B - Learning Through Engagement

Service-learning is a teaching method designed to deepen students' understanding and appreciation of their academic study, while also having a direct impact on the community. These communities may be professional, scholarly, social, cultural, economic or political. Reflection is a key component so that the student develops an awareness of the link between their knowledge, skills, and abilities, and community assets and needs. Upon completion of a service-learning class, students will be able to:

1. Identify the needs and resources of the communities to which they belong.

2. Apply knowledge and skills gained through academic study to real problems and/or opportunities within their communities.

3. Describe the connections between learning on campus and the issues and needs of broader academic, professional or civic communities.

4. Articulate the value of engagement to other members of their communities.

**Examples of Texts and/or Assigned Readings:**

The texts and readings differ based on the specific area of study, course, and instructor. There is a rich literature on how to use service-learning to maximize the positive outcomes to students and community. Further, the Leduc Center has recently developed a 6 module on-line series to help faculty and K-12 teachers to develop a course using service-learning.

Additional resources for faculty can be found on the Leduc Center Webpage:

http://www.umassd.edu/seppce/centers/cce/informationfor/facultystaff/

The link above includes information from national organizations like the Corporation for National and Community Service, and Campus Compact. There are links to grant opportunities, tool kits for faculty, and thousands of syllabi that use service-learning across the disciplines. In addition, the Leduc Center has a library of materials to assist faculty in developing learning goals, strengthening partnerships, developing challenging projects, and assessing learning though reflection.

**Example Learning Activities and Assignments:**

Please see sample syllabi for examples of specific service-learning activities designed to meet the aforementioned learning objectives.

Each year the Assistant Provost asks service-learning faculty to survey their students on the impact that service-learning has had on the goals and objectives of the class, the impact they feel they've had on the community, and the knowledge skills and abilities acquired through these classes. Last year, a sample of 334 students completed the survey. The results are overwhelmingly positive in terms of the impact of service-learning on student learning outcomes and retention.

The questions in the survey which relate most closely to University Studies 5B are:

I. How well could you do each of the following at the beginning of the semester and now:

1. Identify needs and resources of the community

2. Apply knowledge and skills gained to real problems/opportunities in the community

3. Make connections between learning and issues/needs of the community

4. Articulate the value of engagement to other members of the community

5. Communicate effectively orally and in writing

6. Evaluate and integrate information from multiple sources

The results for this section of the survey in the 2012/2013 academic year are:

***Civic Skills:***

The following table shows the difference in the civic skills of participants before and after their participation in service-learning activities. The means below are based on 5 point scale, with 1 being “I can not do this at all’ to 5 being “I can do this very well.” Mean scores of skills before and after their participation in service-learning activities were compared using a paired samples t-test. The t-test shows that there is a significant difference between pre and post service-learning activities scores (p<.001). Thus there is a positive relationship between participation in the service-learning activities and reported gains in civic skills relating to addressing social problems. So, students are able to identify community needs and resources, research problems, formulate plans, and organize and communicate for action because of their service-learning experience.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Civic Skills** | **Pre-mean**  **Skill Score** | **Post-mean**  **Skill Score** |
| Identify needs and resources of the community\*  Apply knowledge and skills gained to real problems/opportunities in my community\*  Make connections between learning and issues/needs of the community\*  Articulate the value of engagement to other members of the community\*  Communicate effectively orally and in writing\*  Evaluate and integrate information from multiple sources\*  Organize other students to take action on a community problem\*  Create a plan to address the issue\*  Get people to care about the problem\*  Organize and run a meeting\*  Find and examine research related to the issue\*  Apply what I learned in my service-learning class\* | 2.85  3.00  2.97  2.93  3.35  3.38  2.75  2.97  3.01  3.06  3.25  2.99 | 4.11  4.06  4.07  4.00  4.12  4.18  3.38  3.57  3.59  3.59  3.80  3.80 |

\*p<.001

Finally, sixty-three percent (n=306) of the respondents answered that they are “thinking about/preparing for a career that helps my community.” This indicates that the majority of respondents are thinking about careers that allow them to be civically engaged as active citizens. In short, participation in service-learning classes is positively correlated with a desire to stay civically engaged post graduation.

Additional artifacts:

In addition to student survey data, student reflections serve as a rich source of qualitative data. Lastly, in many instances, faculty assign project based learning assignments that have reports, presentations, performances, and other tangible outcomes which can be used to assess the impact of service-learning on student and community.

**Sample Course Outline:**

Please see sample syllabi from different departments within different colleges. Presently, each syllabi may not contain the exact learning outcomes stated in 5B. All classes approved as service-learning will have to include those learning objectives on the syllabus.

Service-learning requires creating structure upfront so that students are prepared to take on challenges that maximize their learning opportunities and benefit the community. Part of that structure often takes the form of a partnership with a community based agency. The syllabi submitted and the projects described within are representative only and not meant to be comprehensive. There are service-learning classes in most departments and in every college.

SPA 306 - Medical Spanish - Carlos Benavides

LCE400 - Leadership and Civic Engagement Practicum - Matthew Roy

NUR331 - Experiential learning: Community Health Nursing - All instructors

ELP 563 / POL561 - Public School Finance - Paige