

link theory with experience
service learning
and thought with action

Center for Service Learning
Information Guide and Talking Points



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MISSION

Our mission is to make service learning a priority and core practice at the University of Kansas.

Service learning fosters better understanding of classroom material, is a catalyst for innovative leadership and social responsibility, and can drive positive change in the world.

We will inspire action by creating initiatives that:

connect

To link people, ideas, and resources.

advocate

To promote the interconnectedness of teaching, research, and service.

elevate

To increase the value and relevance of service learning.

challenge

To rethink the role of teacher, learner, classroom, and community.

VISION

We envision the University of Kansas fully and deeply committed to learning, discovery, and engagement within the practice of community-based scholarship.

VALUES

We believe that in order to create an inclusive, productive, and peaceful world in which all humans prosper, students need an education that leads them to become engaged, thoughtful, and committed citizens.

We believe in the transformational power of education.

We believe that every student, faculty member, and administrator must be committed to improving their communities and the world at large.

We believe innovation is essential to attaining and sustaining leadership within the university and the service learning community.

We believe we make a difference.

BRAND PROMISE**catalyst**

An agent that provokes or speeds significant change or action.

SERVICES PROVIDED

The Center for Service Learning provides support and resources for faculty in designing and implementing service learning courses. The Center is available to assist faculty with:

- course development and syllabus preparation
- service learning project ideas
- partnerships with community-based organizations whose needs match course academic goals
- design of appropriate reflection activities
- evaluation measures
- logistics and risk planning
- acquiring a deeper understanding of service learning pedagogy

In addition, the Center assists the University Registrar in documenting student participation in designated service learning experiences, coordinates and facilitates communication between other offices of teaching, research and service at KU, and advocates for service learning by offering high visibility events and resources (workshops, seminars, public lectures).

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DEFINITION OF SERVICE LEARNING AND COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH

A credit bearing, educational experience in which students link their academic studies to community involvement by participating in an organized service project that meets identified community needs. A service learning course should enhance students' understanding of course content, incorporate critical, reflective thinking about the service experience, and promote a sense of civic responsibility.

Senate Executive Committee, University of Kansas

Service learning is a creative method for relating the abstractions of disciplinary study to the realities of human need. For community-based organizations, it is an invitation to participate in the process of higher education and a mechanism to enlist the talents of student volunteers. For students, it is an opportunity to integrate the life of the mind with the habits of the heart.

T.K. Stanton, D.E. Giles, and N.I. Cruz

Community-based research (CBR) is research that is conducted *with* and *for*, not *on*, members of a community. Unlike traditional academic research, CBR is collaborative and change oriented and finds its research questions in the needs of communities, which often require information that they neither have the time nor the resources to obtain.

CBR is a tool, a teaching technique, and an institutional change strategy for social justice, engaging universities' and communities' human resources, expertise, and knowledge-generating capabilities to address social ills. The distinctive combination of collaborative inquiry, critical analysis, and social change that community-based research represents—as well as its potential to unite the three traditional academic missions of teaching, research, and service in innovative ways—has led us to believe that CBR is a next important stage of service learning and engaged scholarship.

Kerry Strand, Sam Marullo, Nick Cutforth, Randy Stoecker, and Patrick Donohue

Community-Based Research and Higher Education

CERTIFICATION IN SERVICE LEARNING

The Center for Service Learning strives to assist faculty in creating meaningful and experiential learning opportunities for students. For those students who choose to partake in these experiences, the Center offers a certification process. The certification process consists of four components including completion of a service learning course, an independent service project, a set of directed civic engagement and leadership readings, and a reflection.

Certification in service learning benefits students in all majors and disciplines and, in turn, supports a diverse array of community organizations. In the past three years, students in over 46 majors or schools and eight graduate programs have been certified in service learning impacting over 68 community organizations and partnering with them for over 9,500 hours of service.

In spring 2006, the Center for Service Learning certified its inaugural group of 91 students. Over the past three years, the numbers have grown considerably.

Fall 2005–Spring 2006: 91 students certified in service learning
 Fall 2006–Spring 2007: 154 students certified in service learning
 Fall 2007–Spring 2008: 227 students certified in service learning

Students in the following majors and graduate programs have been certified in service learning:

Graduate or Professional Programs:

JD in Law
 Masters in Architecture
 Masters in Public Administration
 Masters in Social Work
 Masters in Urban Planning
 Ph.D. in Applied Behavioral Science
 Ph.D. in English
 Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering

Majors or Schools:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Accounting | English |
| African and African-American Studies | French |
| American Studies | Health Sport and Exercise Sciences |
| Anthropology | History |
| Applied Behavioral Science | Human Biology |
| Art History | Humanities |
| Biology | International Studies |
| Biochemistry | Journalism: News and Information |
| Business Management | Journalism: Strategic Communications |
| Chemical Engineering | Marketing |
| Civil Engineering | Mathematics |
| Classical Antiquity | Microbiology |
| Communication Studies | Molecular Bioscience |
| East Asian Languages | Music Performance |
| Economics | Music Therapy |
| Elementary Education | News and Information |

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Philosophy | Sociology |
| Physical Therapy | Social Welfare |
| Political Science | Spanish |
| Psychology | Sports Science |
| Religious Studies | Speech-Language-Hearing |
| Secondary Education | Visual Communication |
| Social Welfare | Women's Studies |

The following community organizations have partnered with faculty and students in service learning courses or independent projects:

Adopt-A-School
AIDS Foundation Houston
Alternative Breaks
American Enterprise Institution
Audio Reader
Babcock Place
Ballard Center
Big Brothers Big Sisters
Bird Physical Therapy
Boys and Girls Club
Brandon Woods
CASA
Child Care Center
Community Drop-In Center
Delaware Street Commons
Douglas County AIDS Foundation
Douglas County Juvenile Detention Center
Douglas County Senior Services
Downtown Lawrence Farmer's Market
East Lawrence Neighborhood Association
Ecumenical Christian Ministries
ESL Tutoring Services
Extra Hands on ALS
Free State High School
Gateway Center
Give Kids the World
Grace Evangelical Presbyterian Youth Group
Head Start
Hillcrest Elementary School
HIV/AIDS Group Home
Independence, Inc.
Jewish Vocational Services
Johnson County Health Department
Journalism School
Jubilee Café
Kansas State Legislature

Kansas State Representative
Lawrence After School Programs
Lawrence Art Center
Lawrence Community Shelter
Lawrence High School
Lawrence Humane Society
Lawrence Memorial Hospital
Lawrence Public Library
Life Enrichment Center
Maywood Community Church
Misericordia
National Coalition for the Homeless
Natural Ties
Navigators
Nelson-Atkins Museum
Newcomer Center of Chicago
Penn House
Project Bridge
Rebuild Lakeshore
SAFEHOME
Small World Nursery
Spofford Home
South Africa Employment Training Center
South Carolina School for the Deaf and Blind
Teach for America
Tenants to Homeowners
Tree Utah
United Cerebral Palsy of Dallas
Van Go Mobile Arts
Wednesday's at Liberty Hall
Women's Transitional Care Services

GROWTH OF SERVICE LEARNING AT KU

In the past three years, the Center for Service Learning has expanded its programming from an original 20 designated service learning courses taught by 17 faculty members in 10 departments to semester highs of 65 service learning courses involving 47 faculty members in 22 different departments.

In total, the Center for Service Learning has partnered with over 85 faculty members representing 30 departments or schools to facilitate mutually beneficial relationships for students and the community.

Fall 2005

Center for Service Learning opens

Spring 2006

20 designated service learning courses
17 faculty members
10 departments

Fall 2006

45 designated service learning courses
28 faculty members
17 departments

Spring 2007

47 designated service learning courses
33 faculty members
20 departments

Fall 2007

65 designated service learning courses
47 faculty members
18 departments

Spring 2008

63 designated service learning courses
46 faculty members
22 departments

BENEFITS OF SERVICE LEARNING

Service learning is a mutually beneficial process. While service learning does support the community, it also promotes growth for students, faculty, and the University as a whole.

Benefits to Students

Certification in service learning offers a chance for students to utilize their classroom skills to address community needs and gain recognition at the same time. It also allows students to apply classroom knowledge in “real-world” settings and gain experience and familiarity with their community.

Benefits to Faculty

Through developing and executing service learning courses, faculty members gain a greater appreciation for their discipline and for their students, become more engaged in their communities both locally and globally, develop diverse connections with the community and other faculty members, and are provided with additional research and funding opportunities.

Benefits to KU

The benefits service learning provides to the University are nationally recognized. According to the Princeton Review’s 2006 edition of 361 Best Colleges, the University of Kansas was named a “College with a Conscience,” placing KU among the top 81 schools in the country in regards to service learning programs and blending academics with community service. Additionally, over 7,000 University of Kansas students donated their time to community service during the 2005-2006 year, earning the University a spot on the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.

Benefits to the Community

Service learning projects utilize the knowledge and capabilities of the university to meet specified community needs. In doing so, service learning creates beneficial relationships between members of the university and members of the community. These relationships foster a variety of other positive outcomes for community organizations including allowing organizations to identify and access additional resources necessary to achieve their mission and goals; creating a larger base from which to draw future volunteers, leaders, and supporters; and allowing organizations to play an integral role in shaping how students perceive current world issues and topics.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

“Going into my service learning class, I was a double-major: Spanish and International Studies. After my class and related independent project experience, I decided to add a third major: Political Science. It had such a large impact upon me that I made a commitment to continue both personally in my service as well as academically.”

Betsy Copeland from Leonardville, KS, worked with the Latino Community Coalition

“My service learning experience strengthened my values and gave me a chance to realize the most important things in life.”

Alison Donahue from Omaha, NE, worked in the Preschool Education Practicum

“I challenge everyone at the University to make their academic experiences meaningful by giving back to their community and taking part in service learning. Every student at the University of Kansas should be certified, not only to help others, but also to help themselves.”

Hillary Frost from Overland Park, KS, worked in the Leadership Studies Practicum

“Research has been very exasperating for me to learn, because it takes so much practice and I can’t be good at it immediately. However, this service project made worth of all the time, frustration, and effort that I’ve put forth the past few months. It also helped me to understand why research is such a crucial tool to have as I begin my career. This project defined the reason I chose this career to begin with—to help and serve others. It was very rewarding to stand in front of strangers, explain tax advice, and observe their “ah ha” expressions or head nods. It really more accurately confirms the past four and a half years of my college education, and that’s a really comforting feeling.”

Kristen Kuhn from Pratt, KS, MAcc-tax student

FACULTY TESTIMONIALS

“While the student enthusiasm for the class’ service learning component has been incredible, the biggest response has been from the AIS Advisory Council. Our alumni and supporters have been quite moved by our students’ efforts to provide tax assistance in the community, in Kansas, and across the nation.”

Raquel Alexander, Assistant Professor, Accounting and Information Systems

“In my classes, service-learning means that students are required to perform community service for twenty hours over the course of the semester, at a list of pre-selected sites. In addition, they must write up field notes and reflections after each community service experience and write a paper based on their service experience at the end of the term. Service-learning is much more than volunteering in the community; it is learning through experience and reflection. Through service-learning, students work with community members who do not walk the halls of privilege, except perhaps to clean or repair them. Students’ interactions with community members not only teach them to value the people they may have failed to notice before, but also teach them to question their position in the social hierarchy, turning their skills of critical analysis inwards. Most of all, students realize how much they have yet to learn and how much the world around them has to teach them.”

Tanya Golash-Boza, Assistant Professor, Sociology

“Service learning has enriched my life as a professor, my students’ lives, and the people with whom my students work in the community. For thirty years, undergraduate students in the Department of Applied Behavioral Science (the KU Program in Human Development and Family Life) have been able to participate in a senior practicum in a program called the Truancy Prevention and Diversion Program. Recognized as a model program, KU undergraduate students receive instruction and supervised experience that allow them to participate in real-world work in the human service field and to gain the satisfaction of knowing they made a difference in a child’s or youth’s life. Most of these KU undergraduate students go on to work in the human service field or attend graduate or law school and subsequently report that it was this service learning opportunity as an undergraduate at KU that impacted their lives in meaningful ways.

So why is service learning important? Service and learning are life long endeavors that change people’s lives. Instilling in our undergraduates not only knowledge and skills but also the understanding and compassion that come from helping others will undoubtedly be our key to a better future!”

Jan Sheldon, Professor, Applied Behavioral Science

“Our undergraduate program provides practicum/service learning experiences for all majors. Thus, students not only learn about the principles of learning and how these principles have been used to help solve human problems, they also get direct experience in helping solve human problems. In the practicum/service learning course that I supervise, for example, undergraduate students spend two semesters teaching children with autism. The students teach children with autism a wide variety of skills: to follow simple instructions, to imitate behaviors demonstrated by their teachers, to identify and label objects and people, to talk to children and adults, and to play with other children. In essence, my service learning practicum in autism provides opportunities for students to test in real life the relevance of what they have previously learned through discussion and reading and to see immediately the direct effects that they can have on the life of a young child who needs their help.”

James A. Sherman, Professor and Former Chair, Applied Behavioral Science

“In my class we talk about many different issues related to equity in education. When students actually put those ideas into practice through service learning, they come to better understand the impact that they can have on the world around them. As future educators, my students are hopeful about the role they will play in shaping the lives of others. But a service learning opportunity makes that hope a reality for them now, while also letting them see the practical constraints to doing this work.”

Karen Lombardi, GTA, Education

RELATIONSHIP OF SERVICE LEARNING TO THE KU GOALS OF GENERAL EDUCATION**Goal 1**

Enhance the skills and knowledge needed to research, organize, evaluate, and apply new information and develop a spirit of critical inquiry and intellectual integrity.

Service learning requires students to develop their critical thinking within the classroom by applying their knowledge outside of the classroom in ways that are valuable to others. The skills they need to research, organize, evaluate, and apply are developed through an evaluation of community needs, the development of a plan to alleviate such needs, and a reflection upon the connections between the course information and their experience.

Goal 2

Acquire knowledge in the fine arts, the humanities, and the social, natural, and mathematical sciences and be able to integrate that knowledge across disciplines.

Service cannot be successful without an awareness of many diverse topics, backgrounds, and skills. Therefore, service learning is an interdisciplinary field that entails the knowledge of and ability to make connections between varied and wide-ranging courses of study.

Goal 3

Improve the core skills of reading, writing, and numeracy, and enhance communication by clear, effective use of language.

Participating in service learning experiences requires students to relate to others in a variety of ways. Through their service, they are required to communicate with and build the trust of individuals from all backgrounds. Through their learning, students are required to critically reflect upon their experiences in both written and spoken form.

Goal 4

Understand and appreciate the development, culture, and diversity of the United States and of other societies and nations.

The service learning experience forges connections between groups of individuals who might not typically interact, allowing students an opportunity to develop relationships and to discover a world outside the University community. The appreciation of the culture and diversity of other societies and nations is more highly understood through the direct one-on-one interaction provided by the service experience.

Goal 5

Become aware of contemporary issues in society, technology, and the natural world and appreciate their complexity of cause and consequences.

In the classroom, service learning students initially study the complex issues with which they will be working. During their service, students witness first-hand the diverse issues affecting our world today. Through subsequent reflection, they then develop ideas for ways to alleviate these major problems.

Goal 6

Practice an ethic of self-discipline, social responsibility, and citizenship on a local, national, and international level.

Students who participate in service learning take initiative for improving the world in which they live while furthering and applying their classroom knowledge. The choice to participate in a service learning experience builds self-discipline, enhances a sense of social responsibility, and creates citizenship by connecting students to local, national, and international issues.

HISTORY OF THE CENTER FOR SERVICE LEARNING

The Center for Service Learning at the University of Kansas opened in 2005 and represents the culmination of a decade of work by students, faculty, and administrators.

Within the last decade, public and community service have gained increasing prominence in the university's understanding of its emerging mission. The Center for Service Learning emerges as a logical next step from a series of KU activities which include the following:

- 1990: The KU Student Senate created and provided funding for the Center for Community Outreach.
- December 1992: The University Board of Regents adopted a "Statement of Institutional Mission" wherein service is included as one of five commitments for the Lawrence campus and one of three commitments for the Medical Center campus in Kansas City.
- February 1995: Chancellor Robert E. Hemenway gave sustained emphasis to earlier commitments to service in his "Ten Points for a Great University." A great university, Hemenway argues, "serves the society that supports it."
- 2001: The Serve Kansas Task Force concluded that service learning "has not been a priority." As part of their recommendations, the Task Force suggested that the university promote "service-based learning as part of the teaching curriculum."
- 2001: KU became a constituent member of the National Campus Compact.
- 2001: The Student Senate committed \$27,000 to supporting a student-run Office of Service Learning in conjunction with the Center for Community Outreach. They concluded, after two years, that this office could not sustain its mission without institutional support.
- 2002: KU committed to supporting Kansas Campus Compact, a statewide consortium of and resource for institutions dedicated to promoting service learning in the State of Kansas.
- February 2002: A Faculty Senate Executive Committee Task Force commissioned by Lloyd Sponholtz and then Associate Provost James Carothers published its report on Service Learning Experiences at KU.
- Fall 2002: As a follow-up to the work performed by the Senate Executive Task Force, Senior Vice Provost Kathleen McCluskey-Fawcett appointed a "Working Group" to address eight specific tasks, all of which related to how opportunities for service and service learning could be fostered through institutional support.
- January 2005: The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) held a Service Learning Institute for faculty based on the Best Practices model.
- February 2005: The CTE and Student Health Services (SHS) received funding (\$10,000) from the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) to support training of faculty in incorporating service learning into their courses and assessing faculty and students outcomes, including health behaviors of students. This grant was matched with support from CTE and SHS.

March 2005: A Center for Service Learning proposal put forth to the Provost is endorsed by the CCO, CTE, Alternative Breaks, and the Student Senate President.

July 2005: Tuition enhancement money was earmarked for the Center for Service Learning

August 2005: The second Service Learning Institute for faculty was held.

August 2005: The Center for Service Learning was founded by Linda Luckey, Assistant to the Senior Vice-Provost, Kevin Hager, Assistant Director, and Hannah Abelbeck and Jackson Sellers, AmeriCorps*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America).

May 2006: The Center for Service Learning certified its inaugural group of 91 students.

August 2006: Cara Burnidge, Corinne Fetter, and Meghan Walsh became the 2nd group of KU AmeriCorps*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America).

September 2006: The University of Kansas was a “College with a Conscience,” according to the Princeton Review’s 361 Best Colleges, which put KU among the top 81 schools in the country when it comes to service-learning programs and blending academics with community service.

October 2006: Close to 7,000 University of Kansas students donated their time to community service projects during the 2005-2006 academic year, earning the university a spot on the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.

February 2007: The Center for Service Learning launched CSLMatchmakers, an annual program developed to link faculty and community partners.

May 2007: The Center for Service Learning named Andi Witczak as Director, after serving as Interim Director for the 2006-2007 academic year.

May 2007: 154 students were certified in service learning for the 2006-2007 academic year.

August 2007: Ryan Casey, Mary Kate Haworth, and Jenna Sheldon-Sherman became the 3rd group of KU AmeriCorps*VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America).

October 2007: For the second year in a row, the University of Kansas earned a spot on the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll as over 8,500 students donated their time to community service projects during the 2006-2007 academic year.

January 2008: The inaugural group of students serving as Service Learning Ambassadors (SLAMs) was chosen. They were selected to act as ambassadors between the Center for Service Learning and the campus community.

February 2008: The Center for Service Learning launched the Venture Challenge, a semester-long competition in which KU student teams and community partners collaborated to address a social challenge.

May 2008: 227 students were certified in service learning for the 2007-2008 academic year.