

**Assessment and Evaluation
Service-Learning Projects
Psychology Partnerships Project
APA/Campus Compact Disciplinary Grant**

Representative projects from the three academic settings were assessed and evaluated through self-report of the project. Information about each project was gathered during a telephone interview. The common themes, processes, and outcomes are summarized below with the hope that becoming aware of these themes, processes, and outcomes can enlighten faculty members who engage in SL to strengthen and deepen the experiences of their students who participate in SL curriculum.

A detailed account of each project can be found at the following link:
It is suggested that you become familiar with the individual projects to better understand the information provided on this page.

Each faculty member responded to a structured set of questions during the interview:

Team Members

- What was their previous involvement in service-learning?
- How much discussion of service-learning as a pedagogy took place and how important was that discussion for the success of your project?
- How much of the project originated in their setting as compared to your teaching agenda (needs & goals)?

Team Formation Process

- What specific hurdles did you have to jump in order to get a commitment from team members? What told you that you had a commitment?
- How long did it take from your initial contacts until you knew you had a “team”?
- When you discussed the assessment component, how well did your team members take the notion that they would be providing “data” about their efforts?
- How much did the assessment component contribute to, or hamper, your efforts with team building (at any point along the process)?

Geographical and Institutional Context

- In what ways has your institution changed as a result of your efforts? If it has not been impacted, who or what prevented that change?
- What would need to happen to further impact the institution?

Project Chronology

- What has happened since your last report?
- How did the process contribute to your team members’ understanding of service-learning, especially as framed by the matrix? Did anyone really “get it”?
- What was one or two important “components” of the project, e.g. specific technique?

Challenges and the Opportunities

- What new ideas have been developed since your last report (even if you have not or do not intend to implement them at this time)?
- What have you done to sustain the partnership? What other things might need to happen to strengthen and sustain the partnership?

Common Themes and Processes

1. Most team members had no, very little or moderate experience with service learning as a pedagogy or involvement in service-learning projects, so this background experience is not necessary to initiate and conduct a successful SL project.
2. Discussion of what SL is and how to do it was a frequent part of the entire process.
3. A successful SL project can be directed entirely by the SL faculty member (with its origins in the classroom) just as well as a SL project that originates and is directed by a separate agency/setting.
4. During the early stages of developing a new team to design a SL project, outside team members will likely not fully commit to the project. Full commitment and participation comes during the latter stages of a project, and that may not come until six months into the project.
5. It is difficult to develop an assessment plan that can be used across different projects. Team members generally were not able to provide data or feedback for the purposes of assessment/evaluation of their projects. Yet, most did not openly express concerns or problems with an assessment plan. In fact, for one team member, the assessment plan helped her to reflect on how SL was working for her and what it was doing for her students (what worked and what did not work).
6. The impact of SL on a faculty member's home institution varies. For some, the impact is minimal, and these cases the faculty probably needs to publicize their work more widely. Long term goals to assist institutions in "institutionalizing" SL might include: provide incentives to faculty to participate in SL, and provide dedicated space and time for SL activities on campus.
7. Sustaining SL initiatives may need faculty from different settings (high school, community college, 4 year) to have some SL experience. Also, the team leader must walk a line between taking charge of SL activities and allowing team members and students to take charge of their work.

Unexpected Outcomes

1. Students who participated in SL projects went on to do more work in similar settings.
2. Faculty from other disciplines worked closely with psychology faculty, e.g. horticulture, biology, medicine, psychiatry, social services. One student in biology later developed her own SL project within her discipline.
3. A university psychology faculty member who was recruited to be a team member who had no previous work with SL is now a firm proponent of SL and active in SL on her campus.