

## **SLS Learning Outcomes**

### **Develop Skills & Knowledge**

- Students will be able to identify relationships among ecological, social, and economic systems.
- Students will be able to describe how their actions impact the sustainability of communities.
- Students will be able to demonstrate skills needed to work effectively with diverse communities.
- Students will be able to analyze how decisions impact the sustainability of communities.

### **Connect to Professional Practice**

- Students will be able to describe how they can use their discipline to make communities more sustainable.

### **Work in Diverse Contexts**

- Students will be able to develop approaches to sustainability challenges in communities.
- Students will be able to evaluate how decisions impact the sustainability of communities.

### **Build Long-Lasting Values and Beliefs**

- Students will develop and manifest personal values and beliefs consistent with their roles as responsible members of local, national, international, and/or professional communities.

### Service-Learning Defined

Service-Learning is a pedagogy that provides students with structured opportunities to learn, develop, and reflect through active participation in thoughtful, organized community engagement (Jawaharal et al 2006 cited in Dukhan et al 2006). Important features of service-learning include (Jacoby 1996):

1. Addresses human and community priorities as defined by the community (local, state, national, or global), often through experiential learning opportunities.
2. Structured reflection explicitly designed to foster learning and development that connects the engagement experiences with course goals, including learning about the larger social issues behind the needs their engagement is addressing.
3. Reciprocity between the community partners and the course so that both community priorities and student learning goals are addressed and all partners involved contribute to determining what is to be learned as well as engage in learning themselves.

### 6 Critical Elements of Thoughtful Community Engaged Learning

(adapted from Mintz and Hesser 1996, Eyler and Giles 1999)

1. *Community Voice*: Community voices identify the priority areas for engagement; student learning goals align with these priorities so that the community engagement is central to the course.
2. *Orientation and Training*: Students need information about the community, the specific partners and the relevant issues.
3. *Meaningful Action*: The ways in which students engage with the community are valuable and necessary to the community and integral to the academic learning goals.
4. *Commitment*: Students are held accountable for honoring their commitment to the agreed upon community engagement.
5. *Reflection*: Because students usually do not automatically make the connections between course content and community engagement experiences on their own, structured reflection is critical to learning. Reflection opportunities should be continuous and place the experience into a broader context (What? So What? Now What?).
6. *Evaluation*: Instructors have a dual responsibility to measure the effectiveness of the engagement in the community and the impact of the student's learning experience.

### Bibliography:

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