

MOUNT ALOYSIUS COLLEGE



SERVICE - LEARNING

Mount Aloysius College

**Service-Learning Faculty
Resource Guide**

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Section One: Overview of Service-Learning

What is Service-Learning?

Service-Learning is a method of instruction in which the students learn the content of the curriculum while actively participating in and reflecting on experiences that benefit both the community and the students. The service-learning method is a three step process that begins with identifying an existing community need and connecting that need to specific academic content that will be learned. The second step in the process is to choose experiences that will make those necessary connections between the existing need and the content to be learned and then follow up with the active participation in the chosen service. The final step is to reflect upon how the service experience has met the needs of both the community and the learner (Service-Learning Plan, 2005).

The ideals of Service-Learning are embedded in both the foundation of the College's history within the Mercy tradition and the Mission and philosophy statements, but are also an integral and relevant component to the current Strategic Plan and the Core Goals and Learning Outcomes.

The Value of Service-Learning

Service-learning enhances all participants: students, faculty, the institution and the local community.

Students

Learning Outcomes

- Positive impact on students' academic learning
- Improves students' ability to apply what they have learned in "the real world"
- Positive impact on academic skills problem analysis, problem-solving, critical thinking, and cognitive development
- Improved ability to understand complexity and ambiguity

Personal Outcomes

- Greater sense of personal efficacy, personal identity, spiritual growth, and moral development
- Increases student motivation
- Greater interpersonal development, particularly the ability to work well with others and build leadership and communication skills

Social Outcomes

- Improved social responsibility and citizenship skills
- Greater involvement in community service after graduation

Career Development

- Provides connections with professionals and community members for learning and career opportunities
- Increases learning, leadership skills, and personal efficacy

Relationship with the Institution

- Stronger relationships with faculty
- Greater satisfaction with college
- Improved graduation rates

Faculty

- Enhances teaching quality
- Provides outlets for professional development
- Meets a wide variety of learning styles

Institution

- Increases student satisfaction
- Increases student retention
- Increases graduation rates
- Improves community relationships

How Service-Learning Supports MAC's Goals & Mission

Service-learning directly corresponds to the Mission and philosophy of Mount Aloysius College. First, the College Mission Statement reads:

“The Mission of Mount Aloysius College is to respond to individual and community needs with quality programs of education in the tradition of the Religious Sisters of Mercy.”

Expanding upon that Mission, the College Philosophy statement reads:

“Mount Aloysius College provides a setting in which students are encouraged to synthesize faith with learning, to develop competence with compassion, to put talents and gifts at the service of others, and to begin to assume leadership in the world community. With emphasis on values of justice, hospitality, mercy, and service, the College's liberal arts core curriculum provides the necessary basis for leadership and the knowledge and skills in a wide range of professions. While the academic focus is paramount at Mount Aloysius, the College also considers spiritual, cultural, social and personal growth as essential elements in the development of the student.”

Together, the Mission and Philosophy of the College directly support the relevance of service-learning experiences. The College is grounded in the traditions of the Sisters of Mercy, which necessitates service to individuals and communities. The College further emphasizes core values related to service-learning, as well as an emphasis on developing the whole student. Service-learning experiences clearly support all of these goals, representing a critical piece in a student's educational experience.

Previous Service-Learning Community Partners

Romero Center

Little People's Place

All Saints Catholic School

Cambria County Prison

Penn Highlands Richland Campus

Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 Bridge Program

John Bosco Orphanage, Guyana

Cresson Public Library

FCI Loretto

Penn Cambria School District

Central Cambria School District

Section Two: Conducting A Service-Learning Project

Providing Transportation

Faculty should not transport students in their personal cars. For most service projects, faculty should arrange car pools with students who do have vehicles. If a van is required, the van must be reserved through the College. Mini grants are available through the Service-Learning Committee to pay for fuel.

Designating A Course As Service-Learning

It is a good idea to let students know ahead of time that your class will be conducting a service-learning project. In order to designate your course as a MAC service-learning course, contact the Registrar's Office. An SL designation will be added to your course number. For example, a section of NU240 that will be doing a service-learning project will read "NU240.01SL." Do this before registration time. Please note, faculty must gain approval from their department and division chair before designating a course as service-learning.

Obtaining a Service-Learning Grant

The Service-Learning Committee at MAC offers grants to support faculty in developing service-learning experiences into their classrooms and help cover the expenses for service-learning projects. Students can apply for a grant totaling \$200 while faculty can apply for a grant totaling \$400 in order to cover expenses for an entire class.

In order to qualify for a service-learning grant, students/classes **MUST** participate in that year's Service-Learning Exposition. Exceptions include students who have graduated and/or are off campus completing internships at the same time as the Exposition.

Grants can be used for expenses such as training, communications (publicity, printing, postage, etc.), materials, supplies and travel expenses.

Monies awarded must be used in the semester in which they were granted. The deadline for applying for the fall semester is November 1; the deadline for spring is April 1. Applications received after the deadlines will be considered only if funds are still available.

Service-Learning Timeline

The following timeline is helpful when planning any service-learning project:

Date:	Consider:
Semester before project	Goals, contact partners, talk to chair, evaluation, alternative assignments
Project semester	Project logistics, dealing with unexpected
End of project semester	Assessment, feedback, reflection

Service-Learning Checklist

To ensure a successful service-learning project, the committee recommends the following:

Phase One: Preparation

- Prepare your course syllabus with clear alignment of course and service-learning project objectives and outcomes.
- Plan course content that aligns with the service-learning project
- Determine the project's requirements, directions and evaluation. Include elements of both formative and summative assessment. Include information such as time requirement, grading criteria, project location, and project evaluation.
- Consider an alternative assignment for students who cannot participate
- Talk to department chair about project
- Determine associated costs and apply for a grant if necessary
- Determine what transportation is needed and what training students may need before entering the service-learning site.

Phase Two: Implementation

- Prior to allowing students to participate in the project, provide a foundation to service-learning by introducing the purpose of the project, assigning readings, and providing examples of past projects.
- Determine a plan for dealing with the unexpected. Anything can happen. Prepare for it all.

Phase Three: Assessment and Celebration

- Assess the students' learning.
- Provide feedback
- Allow time for reflection
- Present the results of your class' experience at the Exposition.

Assessing Your Service-Learning Project

Assessing a service-learning project can be tricky, especially in large classes where monitoring each students' contribution can be difficult. Additionally, it can be even trickier to assess whether or not students have learned from the project.

The following strategies may be helpful for assessing both student participation and student learning:

- Have students write a project report and have them peer review each other's' work.
- Have students give a project presentation and assess the presentation with a rubric.
- Use problem solving to assess students' knowledge, comprehension and skills.
- Have students keep a reflection journal during the project.
- Assign a reflection paper at the end of the project.
- Have students present at the Exposition.
- Meet with individuals to see if everyone is pulling their weight.

Understanding the Service-Learning Site

Every service-learning site is different, and many sites require visitors to complete special trainings or obtain clearances or waivers before conducting a project. Faculty should always discuss this with the site before planning any service-learning project and should plan accordingly. Not all students will be able to obtain clearances or waivers, so alternative assignments should be available for those who are unable to visit the site.

Along these lines, some sites will require project participants to have insurance or may not permit photos to be taken on site. These issues should be addressed before the project begins.

Tracking and Reporting Service-Hours

It is important to keep track of how much time students are spending on their project. Consider developing a form for students to log their time.

It is also important to report hours to the institution by completing this form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfM-i7PUZbgFcbnBz77hmg5sc0WVHbldTp9GWnUP-e_SdnJg/viewform

Section Three: Service-Learning Exposition

What is the Service-Learning Exposition?

The Service-Learning Exposition (Expo) is an opportunity for students to showcase their service-learning projects. The Expo typically takes place in late March or early April. Students are given the opportunity to display materials explaining their service-learning activities and reflections on their accomplishments. The Expo provides attendees the opportunity to hear directly from the students how they made a difference in their community. Additionally, faculty and staff who are teaching innovative service-learning courses are available to share their thoughts on how these projects benefit the students, as well as the community.

Expo Application Form

In order to participate in the Service-Learning Exposition, an application form must be completed. Below is a sample application form for the 2017-2018 academic year. A PDF of this form is available for download at the Mount Aloysius College Service-Learning website (<http://www.mtaloy.edu/learning-programs/service-learning/>). Participants are asked to forward the completed form to either the Service-Learning Expo Chairperson or the Service-Learning Committee Chairperson.

Expo Procedures

Students participating in the Service-Learning Expo are required to have a poster explaining their service-learning project. This poster will be displayed at the Service-Learning Expo. Below are the poster criteria. In addition, students are expected to be present at the Expo to discuss their projects/posters and answer questions from attendees.

Service-Learning Exposition Poster Criteria

1. Required Information:

- Name(s) of Mount Aloysius College student participants
- Course title
- Course instructor
- Community Partner name
- Brief description of community needs addressed in the project
- Brief description of project
- Include information about your evaluation AND reflection
- Brief description of how the project related to the learning goals and objectives of the course (hint: you'll need your syllabus)

2. You may choose to include:

- Pictures from the project
- Tools from the project
- Examples of pamphlets, videos, etc. that were created as a result of your project

3. Suggested Format:

- Standard tri-fold poster (will be supplied by the Service-Learning Committee, please pick up your poster in Office 38, St. Gert's)
- Professional AND Creative
- Note: most of your information on your project will come from your discussion with visitors during the Service-Learning Exposition

Service-Learning Exposition

April 5, 2018

3:30-5 pm

Alumni Hall

Service-Learning Exposition Application 2018

Important Information:

1. Applications are due by 2/22/2018. Please e-mail applications to Dr. Cathleen Golden, cgolden@mtaloy.edu or drop off at her office in ACWC, 217J.
2. Completed posters are due by 4/3/2018 to the Center for Community Engagement.
3. Mentor approval and signature are **required** for this application.
4. Please include names of student participants below. Be sure to print clearly.
5. Please review the attached Service-Learning Exposition Poster Criteria document for participant directions and rules.

Student Name (1): _____

Student Name (2): _____

Student Name (3): _____

Student Name (4): _____

Student Name (5): _____

Course Number, Name, and Semester:

Faculty Mentor's Name & Signature:

Section Four: Service-Learning Committee

For additional information or questions concerning service-learning activities at Mount Aloysius College, please contact any of the Service-Learning Committee members listed below, or the Mission Integration Office.

2017-2018 Service-Learning Committee Members

Ms. Kimberly Asonevich, kasonevich@mtaloy.edu, 814-886-6530
Ms. Karen Castagnola, kcastagnola@mtaloy.edu, 814-886-6440
Dr. Frank Crouse, fcrouse@mtaloy.edu, 814-886-6379
Dr. Cathleen Golden, cgolden@mtaloy.edu, 814-886-6572
Ms. AnaLu MacVean, amacvean@mtaloy.edu, 814-886-6490
Dr. Elizabeth Mansley – Chairperson, emansley@mtaloy.edu, 814-886-6487
Mr. Christopher Mingyar, cmingyar@mtaloy.edu, 814-886-6414
Mr. Frank Sankey, fsankey@mtaloy.edu, 814-408-0644 (videophone)
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