

## **Marquette University Guidelines for High Impact Service Learning Courses**

In order to be classified as a service learning course in the undergraduate bulletin, courses at Marquette University need to meet the following guidelines of best practice in order to ensure that:

- 1.) Students are provided with high quality, transformational learning experiences that enhance their knowledge of course concepts, material and objectives.**
- 2.) Students are provided with opportunities to think critically about matters of social justice, active citizenship, and their personal value systems. These goals are central to the mission and core values of this Catholic Jesuit institution.**
- 3.) The University engages with community members and partner agencies in a respectful, ethical, compassionate, and mutually-beneficial manner. As a neighbor and community member our work should enhance the missions of our community partners and the quest for justice in our community.**

### **Essential Elements of Service Learning Courses:**

- The Service Learning experience engages students and faculty with community partners in mutually beneficial relationships. Students should not just engage in observation, but are required to be of service to the community agency or community members.
- Research shows that the more time a student spends in the community, the better educational gains they will experience. For Service Learning placement model courses, the faculty should require between 18-20 hours a semester to ensure a meaningful experience for both students and community. Project-based work and special courses should be mindful of making sure the commitment and exposure is significant.
- Service Learning projects should meet a real community or agency need or request.
- The faculty member should communicate with the community partner(s) either directly, or through the Service Learning Program by providing course objectives and expectations. All reasonable attempts should be made to include the community partners as co-educators in the process.
- Reflection should be central to the service learning experience. Reflection should be done throughout the semester, and it should be challenging, asking students to think critically about their experiences. Faculty are highly encouraged to employ the D2L Service Learning reflection modules in their course and/or utilize our in-class reflection and out-of-class reflection sessions offered by the Service Learning Program. Reflection must consider issues of social justice in addition to course objectives.
- The syllabus articulates clear service and learning goals and expectations for everyone involved. The Service Learning Program should have the most recent copy of the syllabus so that this information can be shared with the community partners. Faculty are encouraged to use the service learning planning worksheet and service learning guidelines sheet in order to clearly articulate objectives to all constituents.
- The service learning experience is weighted fairly in terms of student grading.
- The faculty member should integrate the service learning experience throughout the course so that students can draw on their experiences to better understand course content, and to make sense of the community experience in light of the course material. Service Learning should be

integrated into lecture, course discussions, and written assignments. It should not be something that is tacked on to a class or considered extra credit.

- If requiring service learning in a course, faculty should still offer a clause and alternative to students with extenuating circumstances to respect our students who may be taking care of families, have disabilities or personal experiences that prevent them from serving, have intensive work obligations etc. If requiring a service learning experience, this should be noted in the Snapshot of classes so that students are aware of this responsibility prior to the beginning of classes.
- Faculty will ensure that appropriate training, supervision, monitoring, support, recognition, and evaluation exists to meet service and learning goals.
- Course structure, activities, and assignments should be inclusive of students from diverse backgrounds.
- Faculty will ensure that community members' names and identities are kept confidential in their students' work.
- Student learning is assessed so that improvements to the service learning process can be made each time the course is taught and to demonstrate effectiveness of the pedagogy.
- Faculty continue in their own growth and professional development around issues related to service learning, experiential learning, social justice, and the scholarship of engagement in order to improve their practice. This can be completed through workshops, seminars, and faculty learning community offerings through the Center for Teaching and Learning, service learning related conferences, and other outside opportunities for growth.