Service-Learning
VT Engage: Community Learning Collaborative
Action.Reflection.Knowledge
engage.vt.edu
What is Service-Learning?

• A teaching and learning approach that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to
  • Enrich the learning experience
  • Teach civic responsibility
  • Strengthen communities

Source: National Commission on Service Learning, 2002
What is Service-Learning?

Service Learning – Approaches to Consider

### Concepts
- Consistent engagement with project throughout course
- Project benefits the community and the student – “community-defined”
- Opportunities for reflection that consider different styles of expression.

### Actions
- Students set an agreed regular schedule with sites. Journal entry after each engagement.
- Host an initial meeting with site representatives and/or tour of site.
- Small group discussions, poster creations, scrapbook of reflections, presentations to class.
Benefits for Faculty

• Values community-based knowledge

• Identify areas for research and publication

• Application of students’ skills and development

• Opportunities to collaborate with community organizations – further own understandings.
Service-Learning at Virginia Tech

Examples of projects

• Community Nutrition Course - Small groups that adopt a partner focused on nutrition.

• Interpersonal Communication – Language and Culture Institute Conversation Partners

• Professionalism in Computer and Electrical Engineering – Assistance to robotics teams.

• Productivity and Quality Leadership – Students research a problem and propose a solution at the guidance of a community partner.
Excursions to Community Partners

Monthly visits to VT Engage community partners to showcase potential projects.

Next excursion:
• August 19th: NRV Home Consortium / Town of Blacksburg – discussion on affordable older adult housing and community development in the NRV.
How VT Engage can support faculty.

• Provides faculty support in the following ways.
  • Identification of community partners
  • Course design/syllabus consultation
  • Placement of students with projects (if needed)
  • Logistics (setting up orientations/resolving challenges/tracking outcomes/hours)
  • Reflection strategies/assistance with classroom discussion
  • Assistance with evaluating experience.

• Community partner network
  Inclusive of local/regional/international opportunities.
What is Global Service-Learning

• Course-based form of experiential education in which students, faculty, staff, institutions
  • Collaborate with diverse community stakeholders on an organized service activity to address real social problems and issues in the community
  • Integrate classroom theory with active learning
  • Gain knowledge and skills related to the course content and advance civic, personal and social development
  • Immerse themselves in another culture, experience daily reality in the host culture and engage in dual exchange of ideas

Source: Bringle and Hatcher, 1995; Grusky, 2000; Kiely, 2005; University of Denver, 2006; University of Georgia, 2011
Why Global Service-Learning?

• Transformative impact

• Increases students’
  • Intercultural competence
  • Language skills
  • Appreciation for cultural difference
  • Tolerance for ambiguity
  • Experiential understanding of complex global problems
  • Profound changes in their world view: political, moral, intellectual, personal, spiritual, cultural

• “…not about accumulating more knowledge but seeing the world in a profoundly different way, one that calls for personal commitment and action.” (Kiely 2004)
Global SL.org

• Resource for international service-learning
  • Tools
  • Research

• Ethical Service Video from Global SL
Global Service-Learning: Initial Things to Consider

• Theme / Topic of interest
  • Women’s Rights
  • Education
  • Environmental Conservation

• Location
  • Community Need & Interest

• Partner Vetting
  • Staff – availability
  • Language
  • Project Accessibility
  • Transparency

• Cost
Global Service Learning: Initial Things to Consider

• Site Visit
  • Background of the Organization
  • Service Work – Needs of the community
  • Location – Safety & Accessibility
  • Facilities – Accommodations, Meals
  • Child Protection – if applicable

• Risk Management
  • VT Global Travel Policy
  • Approval at the Department level
  • Registration through Global Education Office
Types of Global Service-Learning Programs

• Course in-country

• Programs combining on-campus academic work before and after the International Service-Learning experience

• Co-Curricular programs, include structured reflection and learning
  • VT Engage programs
Overview: Global Service-Learning Programs

• Service work
  • Working with communities
  • Establishing long-term relationships
  • Community empowerment & capacity building

• Reciprocity & Respect of local traditions and culture

• Student Preparation & Reflection during / after the trip
  • Active citizenship
Thank you! / Questions