



Using Service-Learning & Community-Based Research
With the General Education Curriculum

**Perspective:
Local to Global**

Faculty Guide Series

*ASU Service-Learning & Community-Based Research
University College | Appalachian State University*





How Service-Learning & Community-Based Research Works With the General Education Curriculum

What is Service-Learning (SL) & Community-Based Research (CBR)?

Service-Learning and Community-Based Research are progressive ways of teaching that have been adopted by university faculty worldwide. Distinguished from traditional community service, service-learning is a “teaching method which combines community service with academic instruction as it focuses on critical, reflective thinking, and civic responsibility” (Introduction to Service-Learning Toolkit, 2003). Community-based research, a more specialized form of service-learning, is a collaborative effort between academic researchers (faculty and students) and community partners that has the goal of the achievement of social justice through research.

Why Use SL & CBR in General Education Courses?

With all the expectations and requirements of the general education curriculum, why include service-learning or community-based research? Simply put, because these pedagogies will allow you to meet many of the course objectives, goals, and expectations of the general education curriculum.

Goal 1: Thinking Critically and Creatively- SL/CBR students are given the opportunity to think critically about the problems in our communities and environments, as well as come up with creative solutions for improving the quality of life for those in need and our environment.

Goal 2: Communicating Effectively- SL/CBR students are expected to be able to make meaning of issues facing our community and environment, as well as be able to advocate for the solutions to those problems. By being an advocate, students must speak clearly, present the issues, and serve as a representative for change.

Goal 3: Making Local to Global Connections- SL/CBR students are able to relate the needs of their local community and environment to the global community and environment. Additionally, SL/CBR students are more likely to become involved in international social justice work.

Goal 4: Understanding Responsibilities of Community Membership- SL/CBR students are able to become socially and environmentally responsible local and global citizens because they come to understand their own personal responsibilities to their community and environment.

Additionally, ACT’s assessment services can help you confirm and demonstrate that your course is doing what you want it to do. The ACT program has assessed all of its courses for the past decade, using an online survey to track student learning outcomes -- many of which are closely related to the general education learning outcomes. For example, students have reported an increase in their ability to:

- Identify problems in the community (87%), understand their causes (82%), and come up with possible solutions (84%).
- Understand how their personal (historical, cultural, etc.) viewpoints affect the way they perceive new knowledge (84%).
- Effectively communicate verbally (90%), in writing (69%), work in groups with others (87%), and be more comfortable working with people different than themselves (89%).
- Have a better understanding of their role as a community member (90%) and are more concerned about community issues (86%).

SL & CBR Project Ideas for Local to Global Themes

Empire, Colonialism, & Globalization

This theme introduces students to the formation, growth, and power of empires. Courses in this theme explore empires’ colonial regimes to gain wealth, resources, and human labor which is intimately linked to the concept of globalization.

At Swarthmore College, professor Meta Mendel-Reyes explores the experience of democratic citizenship by focusing on the role of an activist in public service, community organizing, and social change. Students in this class question the meaning of American democracy by discussing the realities facing 20th century American citizens and their role in the local and national community. Additionally, students in this course complete a public service internship to further explore these topics.

Global Resources

In this theme, students explore how resources are globally distributed and how the acquisition of these commodities impacts and defines local and international relationships, economically, environmentally, and politically.

At Brown University in Rhode Island, professor E. Messer teaches an advanced seminar entitled *Human Rights to Food and Freedom from Hunger* which analyzes human rights to food from historical, legal, political-economic, and cultural perspectives. Drawing on local and global legal and food policies, students examine the institutions and values that promote or interfere with people's ability to acquire a sufficient food supply. Students serve meals and engage in discussion with clients of a local foodbank.

Identity, Culture, & Media

Courses in this theme allow students to explore how folk arts, fine arts, and/or the mass media shape global discourse and one's personal identity.

At Tulane University in New Orleans, professor Nghana Lewis teaches a course on *Hip Hop, HIV/AIDS, and Black Culture*. Here students take an in-depth look at the history, culture, and lives of African-Americans and the inter-related discourses of hip hop and HIV/AIDS. Students then complete a service-learning project teaching students at an inner city school about the clinical, social, and cultural definitions of HIV and AIDS, modes of transmitting the HIV virus, and best practices for preventing the spread of HIV and AIDS.

Origins & Migrations

In this theme, students investigate the impact of migration on human history/prehistory. Students will learn how this migration has crossed borders through new technologies, ideologies, philosophies, and aesthetics.

At Trinity College in Connecticut, professor Dr. Greenburg's *Immigration and Ethnicity in America: the Urban Crucible* students hear from a panel of faculty who immigrate to America from various parts of the world. Additionally, students will gain a full understanding of the immigrant experience by meeting for two hours each week with an immigrant informant they are paired up with by their professor. At the end of the semester, students will creatively display each informant's personal story at a reception for students and informants.

Performance of Culture

Courses in this theme examine the links between performance and culture through diverse perspectives and forms of expression by learning how public and private performances enact culture in a myriad of forms, serving as cultural markers.

In South Africa at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein, professor Elene Coetzer presents her students with information about the development and challenges of a local music program. This program, focused on helping children from historically disadvantaged backgrounds in the rural areas, allows students to teach children how to read music and play instruments, create performances, and even organize a parade starring the children.

Regions in a Global Context

Courses in this theme allow students to become more aware of concepts of local and global communities, enabling them to more fully participate in democratic institutions as informed and globally aware citizens.

Consider following up your semester long course with an international experience with your students. At ASU, professor Tiffany Christian's students explore the grassroot efforts used to improve the living conditions, educational opportunities, and economic well-being of women and children living in Uganda in the spring and then complete their course in the summer by traveling to Uganda for two weeks at the beginning of the summer to work with a Ugandan non-profit organization.

Sustainability & Global Change

Courses in this theme investigate how sustainability involves meeting basic human needs without undermining human communities, culture, or natural environments. Students will explore issues of climate change and environmental social justice issues.

At Wagner College, professors Donald Stearns and Kim Worthy's *Living on Spaceship Earth: Environmental Issues and Their Literary Portrayals* class develops first year students' communication skills through reading, writing, discussions, presentations, and an experiential component working with the Toms River Project. Students in this class take an active role to learn about how water pollution may be linked to childhood cancer, what they can do to prevent further pollution, and how they can help now.

*For more ideas and full course descriptions, please visit:
www.compact.org/category/syllabi*



Below is a list of non-profit agencies in the area that could be utilized in Local to Global themed courses. For a complete list of community partners, please visit act.appstate.edu/communitypartners.

- [Appalachian Coalition for Just and Sustainable Communities](#)
- [Appalachian Regional Development Institute](#)
- [Appalachian Voices](#)
- [ASU Renewable Energy Initiative](#)
- [Farmworkers Health Program](#)
- [Henry Blair Farm](#)
- [Hickory Ridge Homestead](#)
- [High Country Conservancy](#)
- [Horn in the West](#)
- [Mountain Keepers](#)
- [Mountain Home Music](#)
- [Mountain Mission Farms](#)
- [Watauga County Arts Council](#)

Getting Started in Service-Learning

ACT has many resources and services available to make starting your service-learning journey easy. Not only is having your class recognized as an ACT sponsored service-learning course going to provide you with resources, assessment tools, research, and support, it will also allow your students with the opportunity to attend an ACT Service-Learning Orientation Session.

Additionally, students registered for ACT sponsored service-learning courses are now able to count those classes towards the Civic Engagement Certificate (formally Citizen Scholar Certificate) Program which honors students who have participated in a significant number of service-learning courses throughout their collegiate career and have distinguished themselves by demonstrating an outstanding level of commitment to civic leadership and social responsibility.

For more information on registering your course as an ACT sponsored service-learning course, please visit the Engagement website and click on “Course Forms”. This link will provide you with more information about teaching a service-learning class and will provide you with instructions on how to submit your syllabus for review. This process will help you to enhance your course(s) by getting feedback from ASU faculty from various disciplines who have had years of experience with service-learning pedagogy.

Resources and Further Readings on this Topic

- Campus Compact. (2010). Strategies for creating an engaged campus: An advanced service-learning toolkit for service-learning leaders. Boston, MA. Retrieved from <http://www.compact.org/advancedtoolkit/>
- Community-Campus Partnerships for Health. (2010). National resources for service-learning and community-campus partnerships. Seattle, WA: Coroneos, Rose. Retrieved from http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/pdf_files/slresources-aacp.pdf
- National Service-Learning Clearinghouse. (2009). Discipline specific service-learning resources for higher education. Washington, DC: Whitney-Lower, Cheryl. Retrieved from http://www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/he_facts/discipline/
- Ostrow, J, Hesser, G, & Enos, S. (1999). Cultivating the sociological imagination: concepts and models for service-learning in sociology. Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education.
- Weigert, K. & Crews, R. (1999). Teaching for justice: Concepts and models for service-learning in peace studies. Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education.
- Zlotkowski, E. (1998). Successful service-learning programs: New models of excellence in higher education. Bolton, MA: Little, Anker Publishing Company, Inc.

Appalachian & the Community Together

*Appalachian State University
134 Plemmons Student Union
Boone, NC 28608
828.262.254
www.engagement.appstate.edu
www.act.appstate.edu*