Opportunities and Resources for Advanced Service-Learning

Faculty Guide Series

ASU Service-Learning & Community-Based Research
University College | Appalachian State University
Growing Civic Engagement

The ACT Program offers diverse opportunities for individuals and student groups to get involved in human services and environmental advocacy, and it assists faculty members and community partners with integrating community service projects into academic courses and local agencies. As service-learning grows in concept, acceptance, and application, ACT continues to expand its sponsorship of numerous community service opportunities concerning many social issues, which are in great need of both individual and group volunteers. The opportunities continue to grow for all participants—students, faculty, and community partners.

Among the newer opportunities are: consultants and site referrals to help develop service-learning projects, the ACT Faculty Fellows program, guidelines and assistance in using service-learning for promotion and tenure evaluation, community-based research with local partners, community service leave, awards and scholarships for service, internships and jobs for students in the non-profit sector, and service-learning projects beyond Boone into North Carolina, the United States and the world.

Consultants and Site Referrals

ACT’s Service-Learning Coordinator will help faculty develop service-learning projects for their courses and/or help them locate community agencies whose services relate to course curricular goals. She can also help provide ideas for creative, reflective activities which will help students think critically about the services they are providing to those in need.

ACT Faculty Fellows Program

The ACT Faculty Fellows Program has been developed to provide ASU faculty with the opportunity to learn how to effectively integrate service-learning into their courses and to better understand how to utilize service-learning pedagogy to enhance teaching, research, and service. This is done over the course of a fall semester with a series of workshops that are designed to help new service-learning faculty members become acquainted with all aspects of this innovative and powerful pedagogy. Requirements are that faculty be full-time tenure track faculty or non-tenure track with 3+ years at ASU. An incentive package includes an introduction to Service-Learning Toolkit published by Campus Compact ($35 value), a stipend for participation in the Service-Learning Workshop Series, and the opportunity to apply for a special stipend start up grant for a new service-learning class.

Service-Learning for Promotion and Tenure Evaluation

Specific suggestions are provided to help a faculty member prepare for promotion and tenure by linking service-learning to his/her job description, college/department mission and objectives, and accomplishments in teaching, research, and service. Suggestions are also available for departments making promotion/tenure decisions. A number of guidelines are available from service-learning oriented institutions, such as Portland State University (www.psu.edu), Michigan State University (www.msu.edu), California State University, Monterey Bay (www.csumb.edu), and the North Carolina Campus Compact (www.elon.edu/nccc).

Community-Based Research

Community-based research is conducted as an equal partnership between traditionally trained “experts” and members of a community. Such projects start with the community and are progressed by those who are passionate about bringing people together to use knowledge to provide real and innovative solutions. This research is participatory and action-oriented in a way that mobilizes
people to participate as full and equal members of society. As faculty and students, we can collaborate with community members, marginalized groups, community organizations, government ministries, social and health services, and educational institutions in research efforts such that all can benefit.

**Community Service Leave**

In recognition of the State’s diverse needs for volunteers to support schools, communities, citizens and non-profit organizations, and recognizing the commitment of State employees to engage in volunteer service, Community Service Leave may be granted to eligible SPA and leave-earning EPA staff for:

- Child involvement in the schools.
- Volunteer activities in the schools or with a community service organization.
- Tutoring and mentoring in the schools.

There are specific guidelines for each of the options listed above. Please refer to the information about the Community Service Leave Policy that can be found on the Appalachian State University Human Resources website at www.hrs.appstate.edu.

**Internships/Jobs in the Non-Profit Sector**

Students can get an internship, or even a full-time job, that relates to community service. There are many local work study jobs, internships, and professional careers out there that allow students to use their skills and talents. For more information about gaining experience in an academic major through community service, see act.appstate.edu/index.php?module=pagesmith&id=12 for some suggestions.

Regional, national, and international internships are an exciting way for students to gain solid career skills and still work to improve the community and the world around them. Through these kinds of experiences they can also gain valuable insight toward what they may want to do in planning their future. There are even full-time JOBS out there that allow students to connect their concern for human and global issues with their CAREER goals.

For more information about jobs/internships in human service and environmental fields, please contact Michelle Brown in ASU’s Career Development Center at 262-2180. As the Career Counselor for Public Service and Environmental Careers, Michelle would be happy to help you locate the information that you need to embark on a career in service!

**International Alternative Spring Break**

Join a fun group of other ASU students for service work over spring break. In the past, students have travelled to Panama, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Belize, and Czech Republic. This is a great opportunity to travel abroad and make a difference at the same time!

**Awards and Scholarships for Service**

See the North Carolina Campus Compact website (http://org.elon.edu/nccc/awards/index.html) and the National Campus Compact website (http://www.compact.org/awards/) for lists of awards that are available for students and faculty who have done great work in their communities.
I want my students to understand that without practical experience, theoretical knowledge may not be that useful. I want them to understand how theoretical knowledge applies to the real world. I want my students to have to struggle and apply themselves to the problems they would normally just read about. Ambiguity is often a problem for students but they must learn to grapple with it and explore it.

- Lucinda Payne Adjunct Instructor of Psychology at Appalachian State University

Further Readings on this Topic


*Discipline-Specific Service-Learning Resources for Higher Education* http://www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/he_facts/discipline/

Furco, Andrew and Billig, Shelley *Service-Learning: The Essence of the Pedagogy* IAP, 2002

Galura, Joseph *Service-Learning Resources for University Students, Staff, and Faculty Volume 2 of Praxis* (Ann Arbor, Mich.) University of Michigan, Office of Community Service Learning, 1993


Zlotkowski, Edward *Successful Service-Learning Programs. New Models of Excellence in Higher Education.* Anker Publishing Company, Inc. 176 Ballville Road, P.O. Box 249, Bolton, MA