Grow Your Service Learning Toolkit: Do-it-Yourself Workshop

What could be better than developing your service learning and pedagogical toolkit on your own time in the comfort of your own home or office? That is why we have chosen to offer online materials for service learning faculty enrichment this semester rather than find a time to convene together for a workshop. The following links will take you to the latest in journals and other resources where you can gain the newest insights into areas as diverse as: community engagement and health care, more reasons to build service learning (SL) into College of Education courses, ways to incorporate SL into graduate studies, and another take on the importance of civic engagement.


♦ We are members of Campus Compact which offers a number of valuable faculty resources at: http://www.compact.org/resources-for-faculty/

♦ Many institutions of higher learning which have been leading the way in service learning and community-based research have much to offer on their websites. One such university is Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, and the link to their faculty resource pages is: http://csl.iupui.edu/teaching-research/index.shtml

Various additional resources are available through our office as well as online. Please let us know what curricular and/or community-based research tools you need, and the Office of Service Learning will happily assist you in tracking those down.

Please stay tuned for a service learning gathering in the spring.
The Power of Partnership

Twenty undergraduate students in LL420 Leadership for Service (Organizational Leadership) have been working with the Seed of Hope Foundation, a not-for-profit organization directed by a newly minted graduate of the Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership, Gwendolyn Young. One of the goals of the course is to light the fire of community involvement in our students. The students are focusing on the concepts of servant leadership and conflict management while finalizing four deliverables to help guide Seed of Hope in its future work. These hard-working undergrads will generate strategic directions in the areas of fundraising, grants and funding, marketing, and curriculum enhancement. Students have incorporated the use of cairns (a tower of stones) as a means to reflect on learning and personal leadership growth over the eight weeks of the class.

The students have reported that this course is challenging, rewarding and unlike any other they have experienced. Angelique Cope said, "I discovered a new level of service through the assignment of helping develop the organization. Mentally, I stretched myself by being comfortable with being uncomfortable. I have thoroughly enjoyed taking this course. Each week granted more anticipation to see what I would learn and how I could grow after completing the course." Another student, Patti Janowiak said, "The past eight weeks have taught me to take a deeper look at myself in a way I have never done before. What surprised me the most about this class was that I really enjoyed completing a project as a group. Previously, working in teams had never been my favorite type of work."

In addition to the students finding the experience rewarding, our community partners also found the partnership valuable. Gwendolyn L. Young, who is the Executive Director of Seed of Hope Foundation, echoed student sentiments reiterating how influential the class was in developing a strategy to address a real need at Seed of Hope Foundation. "In working with the Leadership for Service class, I have witnessed generosity in a form that is indescribable. The only thing to say is THANK YOU for the GIFTS and SEEDS you've sown into us, our mission, and the young women whose lives we impact through our service. It was as if we hired professional consultants to work for our organization on a very critical project and they delivered an exceptional tangible strategy that we can implement within our organization. We are eternally grateful to Lewis University! Thank you for your partnership."

With the help of the Leadership in Service class, Seed of Hope can continue to provide a warm and welcoming environment for teenage girls. They are able to dream and blossom into confident leaders.

- Mary Woods, Assistant Professor of Organizational Leadership (CAS)
Entrepreneurship and Service Learning at Lewis University

The 2012-2017 Strategic Plan for Lewis University sets forth five “Strategic Directions” aimed at fostering student success at the University. One of the five is “Advance Distinctive Learning Experiences” through strengthening intellectual engagement, advancing ethical grounding, increasing social responsibility and expanding global connectedness. The growing opportunities which students at Lewis have for engaging in service learning and exercising their entrepreneurial ambitions fall squarely into this strategic initiative. There is a clear connection between service learning and entrepreneurship. Through service learning, students work with their community to help address social and economic needs. Entrepreneurship is the process of responding to a perceived need by creating an enterprise to provide the needed good or service. Both require energy, creativity, and a desire to improve lives.

What types of opportunities exist for Lewis students to bring together their passions for entrepreneurship and service learning, and how do these opportunities connect with the Strategic Plan? I will mention three.

**Travel to Uganda:** In May 2014, a group of Lewis students will travel to Uganda for a three-week travel study/service learning course. Professors Christie Billups and Robert Bergman will lead this group. Traveling students have the option to focus either on the role and challenges of women in a rural Ugandan community, or on the role of small entrepreneurs working in the community to satisfy local needs. Students choosing the latter option will take a course in the spring term, “Business Development and Entrepreneurship in Uganda,” taught by Professor Bergman and Professor Frank Rose which will prepare them to work with local business people to help them sustain and grow their enterprises. Lewis students will assist the Ugandan entrepreneurs with their business planning, record keeping, and micro-financing. Thinking about this trip in the context of Lewis’s Strategic Plan, it will give entrepreneurial students the opportunity to strengthen their intellectual engagement with issues faced by the people of Uganda, exercise social responsibility for the common good, and expand their global connectedness with the developing world.

**Stahl Center for Entrepreneurship and Real Estate Studies:** Through the Stahl Center, students have numerous means of exercising their entrepreneurial spirit and passion for service learning to create a distinctive learning experience for themselves. For example, Center Director Kristin Nance is organizing two Business Plan Competitions each academic year in which students will come up with an idea for a new good or service, develop a business plan, and ‘sell’ their plan to a panel of judges. The winner(s) of the competition will receive $5000 to be used toward their business venture. The competition will afford creative, innovative students, with a desire to satisfy a perceived social need the opportunity to refine their ideas and obtain feedback from the successful entrepreneurs who sit on the panel of judges. The Stahl Center website at [http://lewisu.edu/academics/cob/lsc/index.htm](http://lewisu.edu/academics/cob/lsc/index.htm) provides more information on the Business Plan Competitions and other activities sponsored by the Center.

**Enactus:** The student group, Enactus – ‘Entrepreneurial,’ ‘Action’ and ‘Us’ – is looking for more members to help them develop and implement projects that benefit and strengthen intellectual and social engagement with the community. Enactus is a global organization operating at 1600 universities in 39 countries with the stated goal of “...using the power of entrepreneurial action to transform lives and shape a better, more sustainable world.” The recently-formed Lewis chapter is working on a clean water project in conjunction with the Uganda trip and is considering pursuing an urban garden initiative. Senior Derek Frommel is the current president of Enactus at Lewis. Professors Jerry Kavouras and Frank Rose serve as faculty advisors. All of these innovations are striving to make a difference in the region and world by enhancing engagement with academic pursuits and growing a sense of agency among student and faculty participation. As Margaret Mead once said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

-Dr. Frank Rose, Professor of Finance (COB)
Student Voices: Reflecting on their Service Learning Experience

This summer, I volunteered at the SOS Children’s Village’s basketball camp. SOS Children’s Village is a small community of children and teens who live together in a foster care home. Through this service learning project, I was pushed to step out of my comfort zone and interact with a population that I had not had experience with before. Although I was the teacher, I gained just as much from the camp as the children did. The stories they shared, the love that they had for one another, and how easily they accepted my fellow classmates and I as their friends was inspiring. Through working with them, I have realized how much I take for granted each day and how, despite the setbacks, those children appreciate every single thing about their lives.

I look back on this experience with fond memories and a sense of gratitude that I was able to make even a small impact on these children’s lives.

-Megan MacDougall (left) ’15

As part of my service learning course, I and a couple of other girls from my class helped teach children from SOS Children’s Village how to play basketball and soccer. I quickly learned that teaching them these skills was much more difficult than I originally expected. Many of the children were unreceptive to our teaching methods making it very difficult to bond with the children. It became obvious that the child's attitude deeply affected their overall performance on a task. Throughout the camp, I spent more time teaching them how to behave, such as staying on task or paying attention, versus basketball and soccer skills. Knowing that a lot of these children had very bad experiences growing up, it made sense that a lot of them did not respect or believe in us when we were trying to help them. Although we were not as affective in teaching them sports skills, this experience made me realize that forming a bond or relationship with the children was exactly what they needed. Making a connection made all the difference in some of these children’s attitudes and it was all that they were asking for. They needed a friend, not necessarily great basketball skills.

-Kelsey Filippone (right) ’15

I found my experience of volunteering with SOS Children’s Village very rewarding. In the past, I have worked as a volunteer for a summer reading activity, but through this service learning course, I was able to interact with younger kids at a deeper level. As someone who wants to go into secondary education, interacting with these sweet, open-minded kids only increased my interest. Every time my car would pull into the SOS parking lot, they would swarm to my car and instantly bombard me with questions about that day’s activities.

As part of my experience, I was able to work with three siblings; Jaylin, who has autism, Joseph, who has ADD, and Aunna, who was a bit behind in content such as letters, shapes, and colors. I was originally worried about teaching children so young when I had little to no experience with these age groups, but I hit the ground running and made some real progress. There were days that were really rough, days when the children’s behavior and my own nervousness made me feel like we were not making any progress. Despite the ups and downs, Aunna learned most of her alphabet, Joseph learned most of the sight words his teachers wanted him to practice over the summer, and Jaylin learned how to read a clock. Leaving these children was hard. None of us was ready for the end to come. At the end, they asked if I would come back and see them and if I was proud of them to which I happily replied, “I will and of course I am.” I am so thankful for the experience I had at SOS, and I cannot wait to go back again as soon as possible.

-Brendon Casey Jr.
Community Engagement in the CONHP

Innovation for Community Health

As primary care providers, in an evolving health care environment, nurse practitioners (NPs) are at the forefront to impacting the health of a community. Recent legislative changes in the U.S. health care system have emphasized access to primary care services and creating opportunities for providers to care for more of the community.

With this new focus, students learning to become NPs will gain experience and skills through activities involving community health promotion strategies and improvements to community health programs. As a foundation, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services’ Healthy People 2020 addresses goals for community health and health indicators of a community. These concepts are the focus of the first NP specialty track course, 30-610, NP Patient Care Management I: Community/Primary Care.

In 30-610, the NP students are learning about Healthy People 2020 and pertinent community programs and resources necessary to address selected community health indicators. Students will apply this knowledge through the creation of a Community Toolbox that consists of in depth research and selection of valuable community resources for a given population. Historically, the population for which the Toolbox was created was based upon the students own interests rather than addressing real community needs. To become more aligned with Lewis University’s mission and the call for service learning, this valuable learning activity will have an even greater impact if it is moved from a mock situation and designed in partnership with real-world organizations to meet the needs of both the students and the community.

To accomplish this re-design of the course learning activity, the Office of Service Learning (OSL) was contacted for help. Since that initial conversation, it has been a wonderful opportunity to collaborate and learn about current needs of community partners, such as Sarah’s Inn in Oak Park and Bridges to a New Day in Romeoville. Moving forward, the students will be working with community partners in spring of 2014 to create a Community Toolbox for healthcare providers of those persons affected by domestic violence.

-Daisy Sherry PhD, CNP (CONHP)
THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COOPERATIVE

Student to a CEC Member: The Transition

The Community Engagement Cooperative (CEC) is comprised of a group of people who bring their creativity, experience, and unique perspectives to the discussion and promotion of community engagement and service learning. Our goals are to strengthen learning through service, connect offices to create a meaningful service community at Lewis, and collaborate to broaden the service-related, educational tools provided to students. Service is an integral part of our Lewis history, mission, and values, and CEC thought heavily about those values when it was initially created. The committee includes: Career Services, Office of Service Learning, University Ministry, Student Development and Leadership, and the Office of Multicultural Student Services. All five departments are connected through our passion for service. We understand that providing distinctive service/community engagement opportunities is the first step to social responsibility.

As an undergraduate here at Lewis University, I was involved in various courses, organizations and committees that included opportunities for community engagement. I was educated in the Lewis service mindset bringing a unique perspective to the CEC. Through these experiences, I realized that service was not just a requirement, but a part of my life. It has shown me how much I love to serve others, making people laugh and listening to other peoples’ stories. Serving has increased my passion for international community engagement and the need to engage in opportunities that push me to go beyond my comfort zone. Being a part of CEC has allowed me to share my story with other CEC members and increase the fervor for service on campus. I am very blessed to be a part of a committee that works hard to bring interactive, unique learning experiences to students. Having a committee that encourages participation in life-changing experiences and which pushes individuals to consider going beyond their comfort zone is something that Lewis needs. CEC will inspire other students, like me, to continue a life of service by opening students’ hearts and minds to the love of service.

-Sophie Barakat, Graduate Student in MAOL Program

Intro to Environmental Science Course

Dr. Lee Witkowski has partnered with Sagawau focusing on bettering already thriving prairie restoration projects. Now Lee has turned part of his course focus to a prairie restoration project in our very own backyard. The restoration project behind Benilde Hall is a great service project for the environment and Lewis.
Updates from the Office of Service Learning

Community Partner Spotlight

Through our successful 2013 Service Fair, we connected 17 outstanding community partners with nearly 100 students and faculty. Two partners that we would like to highlight are Sunny Hill Nursing Home and Warren-Sharpe Community Center.

Sunny Hill Nursing Home takes a nontraditional approach to long-time care by giving residents the freedom to make their own choices about the way they want to live. Dr. Bill Chura, from the Biology Department, is partnering with Sunny Hill for an upper level biology course in neurobiology next semester. Students will be studying neurodegenerative diseases among the elderly at Sunny Hill through innovative testing and observation methods.

Warren-Sharpe Community Center is a multi-faceted, community-based organization committed to using neighborhood resources to find solutions for neighborhood challenges. Social service programs and assistance to low-income, at-risk families are their primary focus. We enjoyed reconnecting with the Warren-Sharpe representative at the Service Fair and hope to partner a service learning course with them in the near future.

Let the OSL know if a course you are teaching may have student learning outcomes compatible with the types of programs offered at Warren-Sharpe.

If you are seeking ideas of community partners for service learning courses, please visit our searchable database of partners at www.lewisu.edu/servicelearning. Username: lewis; Password: svclearn. Feel free to contact the OSL for suggestions or help finding the partner that works best for your SL course and students. (Contact info on page 8)

Key to Success: Insight from the AmeriCorps VISTA

As my year here at Lewis University progresses, I am gaining a better understanding of the inner workings of service learning, the challenges this office faces, what service learning means to me, and what is needed for the office to continue developing. It has become increasingly obvious the important role our SL faculty, students, and community partners play in the overall success of the program. Not only is the Coordinator of Service Learning, Dr. Christie Billups, influential in its original creation and continued growth, but it has become clear that without the dedicated service learning stakeholders, our office would not exist. It is very important to have dedicated faculty members willing to incorporate service learning into their courses, open minded and enthusiastic students who are transformed by the experience and cannot wait to share it or participate again, and welcoming community agencies who are willing to take the time to facilitate projects that address real needs within or throughout their communities. It is all of these individuals’ dedication, passion, and motivation to create positive change to which the Office of Service Learning owes its growth. The OSL can only function if we all work in the community with the common purpose of igniting dreams, bettering communities, and learning from those experiences.

To all of our service learning advocates, thank you for your support, contributions, and service! We truly hope you realize how much you are appreciated in the OSL.

Emilee Studley, Assistant to the Office of Service Learning
We Joined Facebook!
As other entities on campus have done, the Office of Service Learning (OSL) has decided to join Facebook! We are very excited about this new addition to the many resources we provide to staff, faculty, students, and community partners.
To help support the OSL, we would appreciate it if you “liked” our Facebook page. By “liking” us on Facebook, you will receive updates from the OSL, stay informed about service learning activities, and easily connect with fellow service learners. This space is a chance for everyone to share with the OSL and other “friends” why SL is important, the success of our many SL courses, and how SL impacts each of you. It is a powerful way to join a virtual cohort of service learners who are like-minded in the Lasallian tradition.
As always, we are very grateful for everyone’s continued support. We encourage all members to utilize this resource understanding that contributing to the conversation through Facebook will help us significantly to spread the word of this transformative style of teaching and learning.

- Office of Service Learning

Follow us at http://www.facebook.com/lewisuservicelearning

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