



Alternative Forms of Service-Learning During Challenging Times

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Alternative Forms of Service-Learning During Challenging Times

(All ideas may be adapted to an online option.)

Due to the current COVID-19-related challenges, service-learning remains a critical community resource in times of need, even in a virtual space. This guide was developed by the Center for Civic Engagement (CCE) to assist faculty and students in presenting service-learning options designated as indirect, non-client-facing, research-oriented, or advocacy-based opportunities.

Indirect Service-Learning

Indirect service-learning refers to engagement or activities in which participants help other people without interacting directly with them. Activities may include fundraisers, community cleanups, construction work, and drives for food, clothing, dollars and other supplies. Activities may also include online or virtual ways to fulfill service-learning, advocacy, or alternative learning opportunities that allow the participant to engage in meaningful reflection.

Ideas for Indirect Service-Learning

Because of the current COVID-19 pandemic, students will be unable to attend College-sponsored service-learning events. To ensure that students have an opportunity to complete the course requirements involving service-learning, the following activities have been created for consideration by faculty and students. Please note that the activities have a total number of suggested hours after each description. Please consider alternative options to traditional service-learning during this challenging period.

Activity 1: Explore local, state and/or federal policies that impact a specific service-learning agency and/or affected community about which you deeply care. Develop a one-to-two-page written summary. Outline your specific recommendations for advocacy strategies/action steps. (3 hours)

Activity 2: Research, identify, and complete an online training focused on a population served by a non-profit agency. Identify how this information could be used to better advocate for the needs of this population in practice. How will you apply what you have learned? Provide your instructor with proof of completion of this online training. (Hours TBD based on training certificate; instructors will make that decision)

Activity 3: Apply developmental theory to an informed choice of interventions to best address the needs of a specific client population. Write a one-page summary paper. (2 hours)

Activity 4: Review the strategic plan of a non-profit agency. Strategic plans can typically be located on the webpages of the organizations. Identify ways in which the plan connects with agency practice and assists in fulfilling the mission and goals. Provide feedback and observations regarding positive progress toward these goals and potential areas of need. Document your findings in a one-to-two- page summary and discuss with your instructor. (3 hours)

Activity 5: Develop a current plan for personal and professional wellness/sustainability. Include identification of stressors that impact you the most and specific strategies that you can implement in support of your health, well-being and professional satisfaction. What promotes your own sustainability and resilience? How can you apply this to your future practice? (3 hours)

Activity 6: Develop increased self-awareness through the completion of a selected assessment (Character Scale) and reflect on the results with your instructor. (1 hour)

[Take the Values in Action Inventory](#)

Activity 7: Develop a sustainability (self-care) or team-building activity to implement with fellow students at a local non-profit agency. Write a one-page summary that includes instructions for the service rendered. Share and discuss with your instructor. (3 hours)

Activity 8: Develop a three-year professional development plan, identifying desired achievements and related action plan(s). If appropriate, include planning for additional licensure/certification. Include ways to contribute to the advancement of your chosen profession. Document your plan in one to two pages and discuss with the class and instructor. (2 hours)

Activity 9: Create an education plan to help a non-profit agency with a focus on staying physically and mentally healthy. Please write a two-to-three-page description and use references to support your plan. (4 hours)

Activity 10: Create lists of referrals to other community resources for a local non-profit agency. Include the list(s) in a two-to-three-page document using bullet points. Include addresses, phone numbers, and key services provided. (4 hours)

Activity 11: Read Social Work Voting Toolkit

Go to [Social Work Voting Toolkit](#). Develop a plan for implementation within the agency where you wish to complete your service-learning activities. (3 hours)

Source: https://uncw.edu/chhs/swk/academic/remote/documents/service-learning-alternatives_ssw.pdf

Virtual Service Opportunities

Ways that volunteers can support organizations from home or online during COVID-19

1. Writing cards, sending letters, or creating craft projects (such as making toys for shelter animals, knitting hats and scarves for homeless individuals, or creating blankets for seniors)
2. Becoming social media ambassadors, hosting online fundraisers or donation drives, or raising awareness of your organization and related social issues through advocacy
3. Offering a skilled service that can be done remotely, such as web development, graphic design, writing/editing, or language translating
4. Offering online delivery of services such as financial coaching, tutoring and mentoring, or theater or musical performances
5. Recording theater or musical performances, audiobooks, or how-to videos
6. Asking individuals to pledge to volunteer at a future event or make a financial contribution to a specific organizational need
7. Recognizing valued volunteers on social media; sharing stories of past service events to keep volunteers engaged if they are unable to serve!

Source: <https://uca.edu/servicelearning/service-learning-and-covid-19/>

Research-Based Service-Learning: gathering and presenting information on areas of interest and need-projects. Examples include the following:

1. Writing a guide on available community services and translating it into Spanish and other languages
2. Conducting longitudinal studies of local bodies of water; water testing for local residents
3. Gathering information and creating brochures or videos for non-profit agencies
4. Mapping state lands and monitoring flora and fauna

Advocacy-Based Service-Learning: educating others about topics of public interest—that is, projects that aim to create awareness and action on an issue that impacts the community. Examples include the following:

1. Planning and facilitating public forums on topics of interest in the community
2. Conducting public information campaigns on topics of interest or local needs
3. Working with elected officials to draft legislation to improve communities

Disaster Planning Alternative Service-Learning Toolkit Ideas

The purpose of this section is to encourage community members to plan ahead for a disaster. You can create an individual, family or community plan. Before you begin building a disaster kit, it is important to understand what disasters you need to prepare for and how to create a plan for your family or another group in need. Follow the links below to understand why disaster preparedness is so important, what disasters you are most vulnerable to, and how you can begin the process to plan and prepare for future disasters.

Indirect Service	Advocacy	Research
<p>Collect or craft blankets for people displaced from their homes.</p> <p>Raise money to support victims of a disaster using various social media platforms.</p> <p>Write letters, send email, conduct crowd-funding, or host a webinar to raise awareness of community problems or civic issues such as food insecurity.</p>	<p>Inform the community about the needs of people affected by the pandemic.</p> <p>Share information on social media, in your network, or on posters.</p> <p>Speak to lawmakers regarding safety issues that need addressing.</p>	<p>Conduct online surveys to determine to what extent people are knowledgeable about weather, safety or disaster precautions they should take. Include 1-10 scale along with open-ended responses.</p> <p>Compile the information gathered and decide what resources are needed to address knowledge gaps and develop training.</p>

Source: <https://www.learningtogive.org/resources/disaster-preparation-and-response-toolkit>

Red Cross: The American Red Cross has an ongoing critical need for blood and platelet donations amidst COVID-19 and other uncertainties. You can make an appointment to give blood or platelets at <https://www.redcross.org/>

FEMA Free Online Training: Emergency Management Institute (EMI) offers self-paced courses designed for people who have emergency management responsibilities and the general public. All are offered free-of-charge to those who qualify for enrollment. To obtain a complete listing of courses, view the [list of active courses](#). You may be able to earn Continuing Education Units upon completion.

Other Ideas

1. Collect fleece blankets (or pillows) for children who have experienced a loss. A blanket may provide warmth or be used as a comfort item
2. Collect toiletries, such as toothpaste, soap, socks, and snacks for families
3. Write letters to show support for laws that help people recover from disasters
4. Support fundraising activities for local non-profit organizations

Source: <https://www.learningtogive.org/resources/disaster-preparation-and-response-toolkit>

Sample Community Partners and Resources for Investigation and Service

Below is a list of online resources that may expand the learning around the presenting issue and involve students in identifying needs and solutions:

- [Red Cross NE Florida](#)
- [United Way](#)
- [Delores Barr Foundation](#)
- [Jacksonville Public Education Fund](#)
- [Family Promise](#)

Culturally Competent Nursing Care: A Cornerstone of Caring?

This e-learning program is designed to help nurses deliver culturally and linguistically competent care. Cultural and linguistic competency is the capacity for individuals and organizations to work and communicate effectively in cross-cultural situations. Cultural and linguistic competency can help improve the quality of the care you deliver to patients from diverse cultural backgrounds. For more information, please visit the [Culturally Competent Nursing Care: A Cornerstone of Caring](#) webpage.

32nd Annual Global Youth Service Days April and May 2020 (Virtual)

Global Youth Service Day is the largest youth service and civic action event in the world. This event celebrates and builds the capacity of youth ages 5-25 to help our communities and democracy thrive by working together for the common good. Youth can participate in Global Youth Service Day at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information, please visit the [Global Youth Service Day](#) page.

Summary Statement

During the COVID-19 pandemic, academic service-learning has changed drastically for students and faculty. FSCJ's Center for Civic Engagement is committed to supporting new ways of indirect service-learning while respecting social distancing. The CCE team welcomes the opportunity to help faculty plan indirect and/or virtual service-learning activities that foster meaningful community engagement and critical reflection among students.

"The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don't wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope, [and] you will fill yourself with hope."—Barack Obama

Works Consulted

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Alternative Service-Learning By Discipline Area

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Center for Civic Engagement has provided options for students to engage in non-direct service-learning with an international focus. Students will be able to acquire broader learning experiences and expanded service opportunities while connecting to worldwide social needs.

Discipline	Action	Organization	Tools	Communities Served	Link
Most Disciplines	Participate in a variety of projects	United Nations	Varies	Varies	https://www.onlinevolunteering.org/en/opportunities
Business	Design a fundraising campaign	Community Agriculture and Environmental Protection Association (CAEPA)	Varies	Cameroon	https://www.onlinevolunteering.org/en/community-agriculture-and-environmental-protection-association-caepa
Computer Science	Contribute to open source projects	GitHub	Varies	Varies by software; open source community	https://github.com/open-source
Criminal Justice	Transcribe notes from the Supreme Court of the United States	Zooniverse	Web browser	US citizenry, legal scholars, historians	https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/zooniverse/scotus-notes-behind-the-scenes-at-supreme-court-conference

Discipline	Action	Organization	Tools	Communities Served	Link
Education	Participate in an online mentoring program where students and their adult mentors read a book and then discuss it online	ePals	Varies	Varies	https://cricketmedia.com/meet-crickettogether
English	Proofread and text edit	Love and Care for People	Varies	Ireland, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, and Nigeria	http://www.loveandcareforpeople.eu/
Geography	Become a geo-referencer	British Library	Web-browser	Cities, museums, historical community, geographers	http://www.bl.uk/georeferencer/
Health Care	Engage in data Collection	Love and Care for the People	Varies	Manilla	https://www.onlinevolunteering.org/en/iom-manila-human-resources-operations/support-data-collection-processing-and-communication-covid-19
History	Transcribe artifacts, documents, and videos, tag videos, translate documents	MicroPasts	Web-browser	Historical community; libraries, archives	https://crowdsourced.micropasts.org/

Discipline	Action	Organization	Tools	Communities Served	Link
History	Transcribe handwritten documents and letters	Stanford University	Web browser	Historical community; libraries, archives	http://library.stanford.edu/blogs/special-collections-unbound/2017/10/archives-launches-transcription-crowdsourcing-project
History	Transcribe primary source documents	Library of Congress	Varies LOC Web-Based Tool	US	https://crowd.loc.gov/campaigns-topics/
Human Services	Map villages, roads, and buildings in rural Tanzania to protect girls from genital mutilation	Tanzania Development Trust	Varies	Tanzania	https://www.onlinevolunteering.org/en/tanzania-development-trust/mapping-villages-roads-and-buildings-rural-tanzania-protect-girls-fgm
Humanities	Become a Smithsonian Digital Volunteer Transcription Center	Smithsonian	Smithsonian Web-Based Tool	Humanities disciplines	https://transcription.si.edu/
Law	Transcribe notes from the Supreme Court of the United States	Zooniverse	Web browsers	US citizenry, legal scholars, historians	https://www.zooniverse.org/projects/zooniverse/scotus-notes-behind-the-scenes-at-supreme-court-conference

Discipline	Action	Organization	Tools	Communities Served	Link
Most Disciplines	Create closed caption for videos on YouTube within a given discipline	Amara	Amara Transcribing Web-Based Tool	People with hearing loss or impairment. ESL community	http://www.amara.org
Most Disciplines	Serve as a data miner, statistician or market researcher	Enhance a Village	Varies	Philippines	http://www.enhanceavillage.org/
Most Disciplines	Transcribing and Organizing Data Advocate for Causes People-powered research	Zooniverse	Varies	Varies	https://www.zooniverse.org/get-involved https://www.zooniverse.org/projects
Most Disciplines	Produce oral history recordings	Story Corps	Recording tool, cellphone app	Varies	https://storycorps.org/participate/storycorps-diy/

Discipline	Action	Organization	Tools	Communities Served	Link
Most Disciplines	Develop content anyone	Wikimedia Foundation	Web-browser, document program (e.g. MS Word, Google Docs), image editing tool (depends upon project)	Varies	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Contributing_to_Wikipedia
Most Disciplines	Engage in research and data entry of historical facts	World Archives Project Ancestry	Varies	Varies	https://www.ancestry.com/community/awap
Most Disciplines	Contribute to a variety of projects	American Cancer Society	Varies - primarily social media	US	https://www.cancer.org/involved/volunteer/online-and-social.html
Nursing	Participate in the Culturally Competent Nursing Care: A Cornerstone of Caring program	Local or international organization or community	Online certificate	Varies	https://ccnm.thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/default.asp?ErrorMessage=Your+session+has+been+timed+out%2E+Please+log+in+to+access+the+site%2E&fromURL=%2FContent%2FIntroduction%2FIntroduction1%2Easp%3F
Technical Writing	Contribute to open source projects	Apache Software Foundation	Varies	Varies by software; open source community	http://www.apache.org/foundation/getinvolved.html

Discipline	Action	Organization	Tools	Communities Served	Link
Theater	Transcribe playbills	British Library	Web-browser	British Library, archives, history community	https://www.libcrowds.com/collection/playbills