

# Service Learning Toolkit







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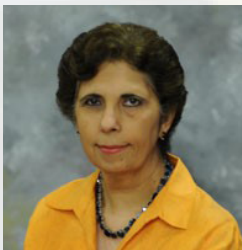
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# The Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning

The mission of CCESL is to support and promote the mission and vision of the university by building external relationships with local and regional communities, philanthropic organizations, foundations, faith-based organizations, education and civic institutions, governmental agencies, and individuals, in order to enhance student learning, responsible citizenship, and services to the community.



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# The Community Engagement & Service Learning Committee

The Community Engagement & Service Learning Committee is comprised of UHD staff and faculty members appointed by the Provost. The faculty membership consists of one representative, tenure, tenure-track or lecturer from each department. Staff members include representatives from the President's office, the Provost's office, Institutional Effectiveness, as well as from colleges.

The committee is charged with reviewing proposals for Community Engagement and Service Learning grants and course designations as well as advising the leadership of the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning on related issues.

Click [here](#) for current CESL committee members.

Responsibilities of the CESL committee include:

- Develop and approve criteria for service learning courses including syllabus requirements and assessment strategies
- Review applications for Service Learning funding requests
- Review and select student-led and staff-led Community Engagement Grants
- Act as liaison between the Service Learning Committee and departmental colleagues, chairs, and Deans
- Establish criteria for the President's Community Engagement Award for staff and faculty
- Determine annual President's Community Engagement Award winner for staff and faculty





# We're Here to Help

Engaging your students inside the classroom with context from the real world will help your students build stronger academic skills and create an excitement for learning. Community engagement coupled with reflection contributes to students' critical-thinking skills.

**When you register your course as Service Learning (SL), CCESL will help you:**

- Find and develop community partnerships
- Record and track students' service hours through our new tracking system
- Refine your Service Reflection
- Provide documentation of your involvement for promotion and tenure files
- Offer training and resources



# What is Service Learning?

Service learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities (Learn and Serve America National Service Learning Clearinghouse).

Service learning is a process of involving students in community service activities combined with facilitated means for applying the experience to their academic and personal development. It is a form of experiential education aimed at enhancing and enriching student learning in course material. When compared to other forms of experiential learning like internships and cooperative education, it is similar in that it is studentcentered, hands-on and directly applicable to the curriculum.



The critical difference and distinguishing characteristic of service learning is its reciprocal and balanced emphasis on both students learning and addressing real needs in the community. Course learning objectives are linked to meaningful human, safety, educational, and environmental needs that are co-determined with community partners and service recipients. Course materials such as lectures, readings, discussions, and reflection activities supplement the student service. In turn, the service experience is brought back to the classroom to enhance the academic dialogue and student comprehension. Students work on real problems that make academic learning relevant while simultaneously enhancing their social skills, analytical ability, civic and ethical responsibility, self-efficacy, and career development (Fayetteville State University).





# Why Participate in Service Learning?

## Benefits For Students

- Increase understanding of course concepts
- Gain hands-on experience
- Explore and/or cement values and beliefs
- Opportunities to act on values and beliefs
- Develop critical thinking and problem solving skills
- Grow an understanding of diverse cultures and communities
- Learn more about social issues and their root causes
- Improve the ability to handle ambiguity and be open to change
- Develop communication, collaboration, and leadership skills
- Connect with professionals and community members

## Benefits for Faculty

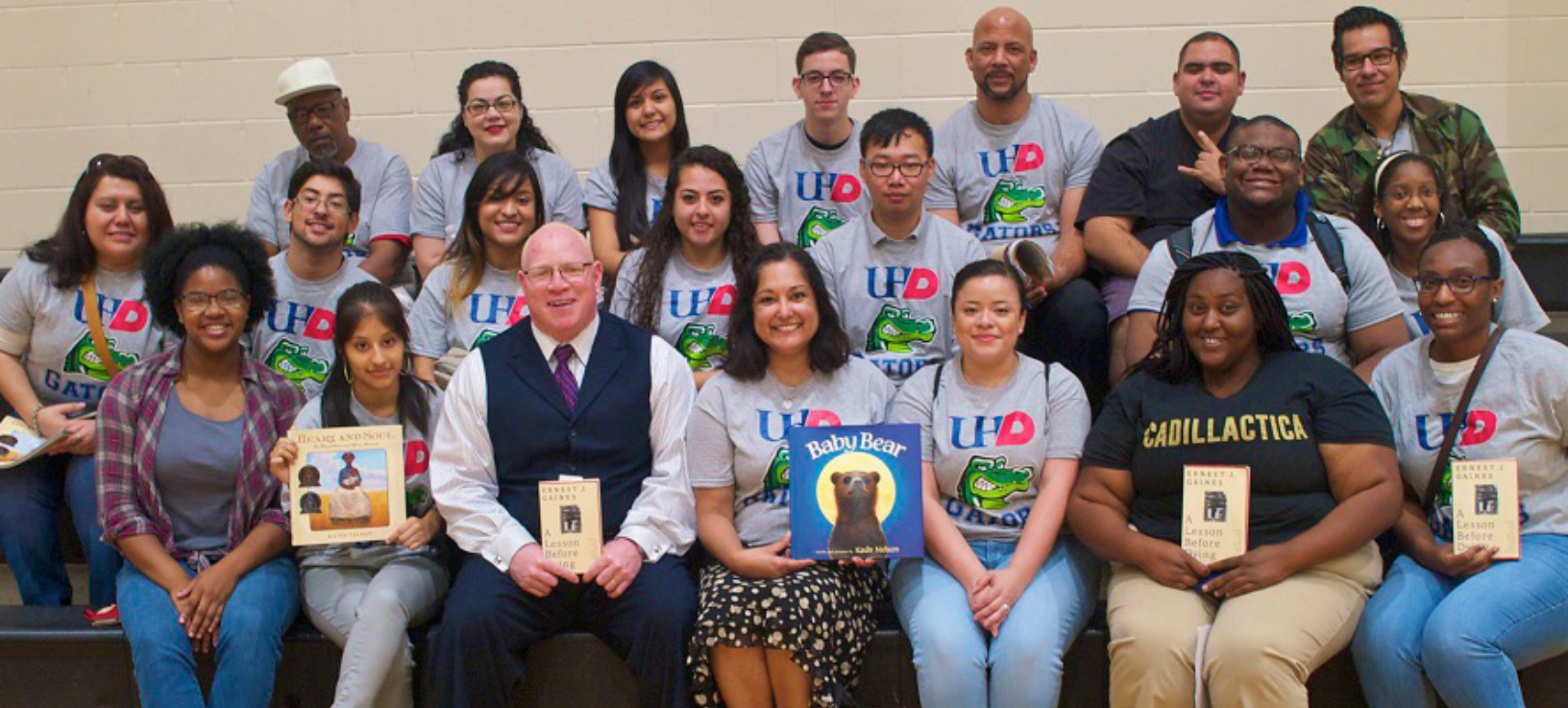
- Encourage interactive teaching methods and reciprocal learning between faculty and students
- Add new insights and dimensions to class discussions
- Lead to new avenues for research and publication
- Promote students' active learning
- Develop students' civic leadership skills
- Attract highly motivated and engaged students
- Foster relationships between faculty and Houston community organizations, which can
- Open other opportunities for collaborative work

## Benefits for Community Partners

- Gain additional human resources needed to achieve organizational goals
- Increase public awareness of key issues
- Educate students/youth about community issues
- Identify and access other UHD resources; build relationships with UHD faculty, students & staff

*(List from: University of Minnesota, Center for Community-Engaged Learning)*





# Service Learning Criteria

The goals of the service learning program at the University of Houston-Downtown, are to (1) enhance student academic learning through real-world experiences, (2) increase students' sense of civic identity, (3) provide support to faculty to integrate service learning into their disciplines, and (4) support meaningful projects that positively impact communities.

UHD has adopted a Student Learning Outcome that reflects our goals in service learning:

Students will be able to connect and extend knowledge and skills from their own academic study/field/discipline to the service learning project.

At UHD, all Service Learning courses must require a minimum of 10 hours of service from each student. Part of these hours could be student time spent planning the project inside or outside of the classroom. Students should log all of their participation hours using the UHD Hours Tracking System and be approved by the faculty member.

Including a Service Learning component to your course is not simply an add-on. It is an integral part of student learning, retention, and meaning-making. As such, the incorporation of service should be evident in your course

syllabus and students should complete the Service Learning project as a part of the course requirements. The service learning Student Learning Outcome should also be reflected in the course syllabus.

In the event that a student is unable to perform the Service Learning requirement, and that there is no other section of that course being taught at the same time that does not have a Service Learning component, an alternative service project must be offered to that student. This does not apply if service is a part of the student's degree plan, or if the student does not make the conflict known prior to the Official Day of Record.

In the likely event that the service project being performed is in collaboration with another organization, the Service Learning faculty should notify CCESL of the partnership. This helps us ensure that:

- appropriate assessment is taking place,
- communication with that organization is streamlined through their established connection with UHD, and
- the organization or entity can be recognized as an official Community Partner of UHD.

# Service Learning Assessment

As a part of the requirement for SL course designation, all faculty teaching a Service Learning course must agree to participate in the assessment of the Service Learning Program at UHD.

## SL Assessment Requirements

- **Spring 2018:** Student Service Reflection

Each Service Learning course will require students to submit a written reflection on their service experience. This reflection should NOT be a summary of activities. Rather, the reflection should showcase students' understanding of the way the service project correlates to the content learned in the classroom. In order to ensure that students complete the reflection, Service Learning faculty should apply some grade weight to this assignment.

For the spring 2018 semester, CCESL would like to pilot a standard set of reflection questions as a part of the new [Service Learning Assessment Plan](#). A copy of these assignment prompts and the rubric that will be utilized for assessment can be found at the back of this toolkit. Please contact CCESL Assistant Director, Krysti Turnquest (713-226-5291) with questions regarding this request.

- **Fall 2018 and beyond:** Student Service Reflection

Each Service Learning course will require students to submit a written reflection on their service experience. A team of CE/SL Committee members will use the reflections as part of CCESL's overall effectiveness assessment of the Service Learning program—not to measure individual faculty or teaching. To assess the assignments, the committee will use a rubric developed by the CE/SL Committee. Reflection prompts given to students should ensure that they address each of the elements within the rubric. Faculty may choose to create their own reflection assignment prompts or they may use the ones provided in the Service Learning Assessment Plan. Whether students must answer in paragraph form or short answer is up to the discretion of the instructor.

In order to ensure that students complete the reflection, Service Learning faculty should apply some grade weight to this assignment.

- End of course SL student survey

A link to an online survey will be provided by CCESL for all students to complete prior to the end of the semester. The questions on the survey help CCESL to understand how we can improve the SL program for future students.

- Tracking student hours

An online hours tracking system has been built by the UHD IT department. This system is meant to capture student service hours performed for course credit (may exceed 10 hours). Instructions on using the hours tracking system can be found on the CCESL website [here](#) or in the following pages of this toolkit.

- Community Impact Survey

All faculty teaching Service Learning courses are required to complete the Community Impact Survey at the close of each semester. The survey details the impact of you and your students' service to the community. The information gathered in this survey is utilized for institution-wide reporting purposes.



# Procedure for SL Course Designation

A call for applications will be sent out during the first half of each semester for designation of courses the following semester (Example: A call for applications sent out in February would be for fall courses). Applications should be submitted digitally through the link provided in the announcement. Included with the application for course designation, is a budget request form. Faculty may apply for small grant monies to help fund their service project.

Typically, one to two informational sessions will be held prior to the application deadline in order to help clarify questions and improve chances of applications being approved for SL designation and funding without further adjustments.

All applications are received by CCESL and reviewed by the Community Engagement and Service Learning Committee. This committee will approve or deny SL designations as well as approve, deny, or modify budget requests for service learning projects.

Frequently, the committee will request that the applying faculty make changes to their projects, or further clarify their intentions. This process is typically fluid. CCESL acts as a liaison between the Community Engagement and Service Learning Committee and Service Learning faculty.



Once all courses have been approved or denied, the full list of Service Learning courses is sent to the registrar's office who then applies the designations to the course schedule and student transcripts. Cost centers associated with granted funds for Service Learning projects are distributed at the beginning of the semester in which the course will occur. SL faculty should first check with their DBA regarding this account.

*\*The Service Learning Assessment Plan can be found in the appendices.*





# Service Learning Course Checklist

- The project being proposed addresses a community need (campus, local, regional, global)
- The project is associated with one or more course objectives and is embedded in the syllabus
- The project demonstrates a clear connection between the service activity and the course content
- The project involves reciprocity between course and community that results in students' increased learning & engagement
- Student reflection is a required course component and can be evaluated using the Service Learning Assessment Rubric.
- Involves at least 10 hours of community service (may include planning time)
- CCESL has been notified of community partner(s)
- An alternative assignment has been created
- Student grade based on achievement of course objectives, not completed service hours

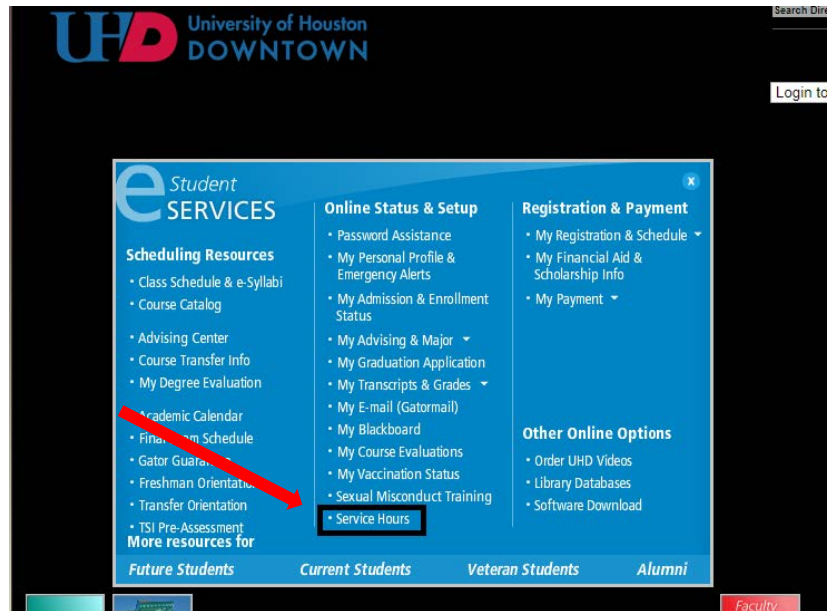


# Tracking Your Service Hours

You may access the link to track your service hours in two ways:

## Access Point 1 (eServices):

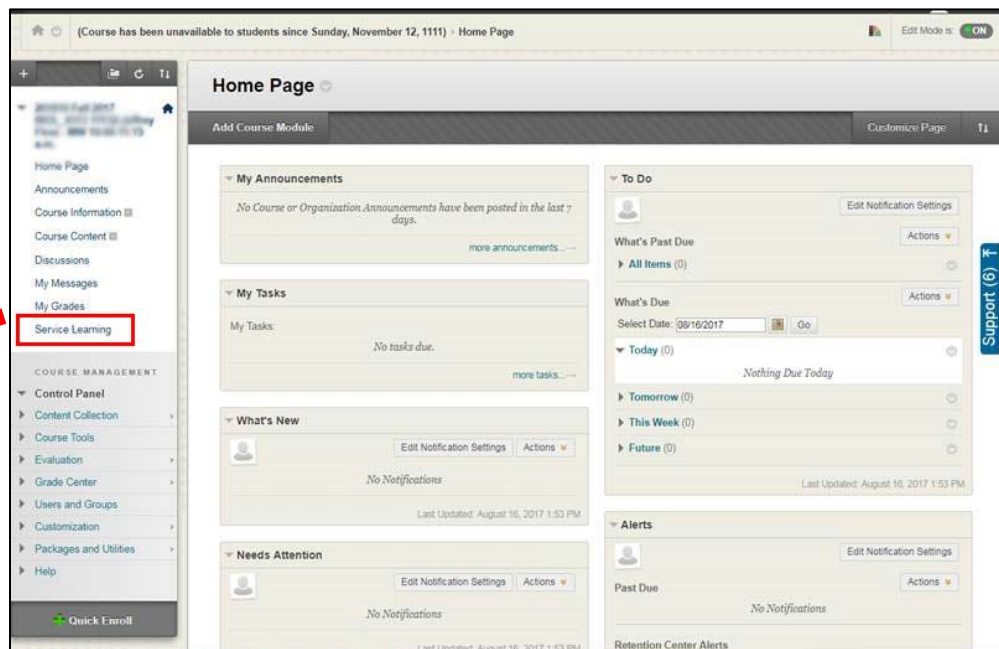
- Select [Service Hours](#) from the [Student eServices Page](#).



## Access Point 2 (Blackboard):

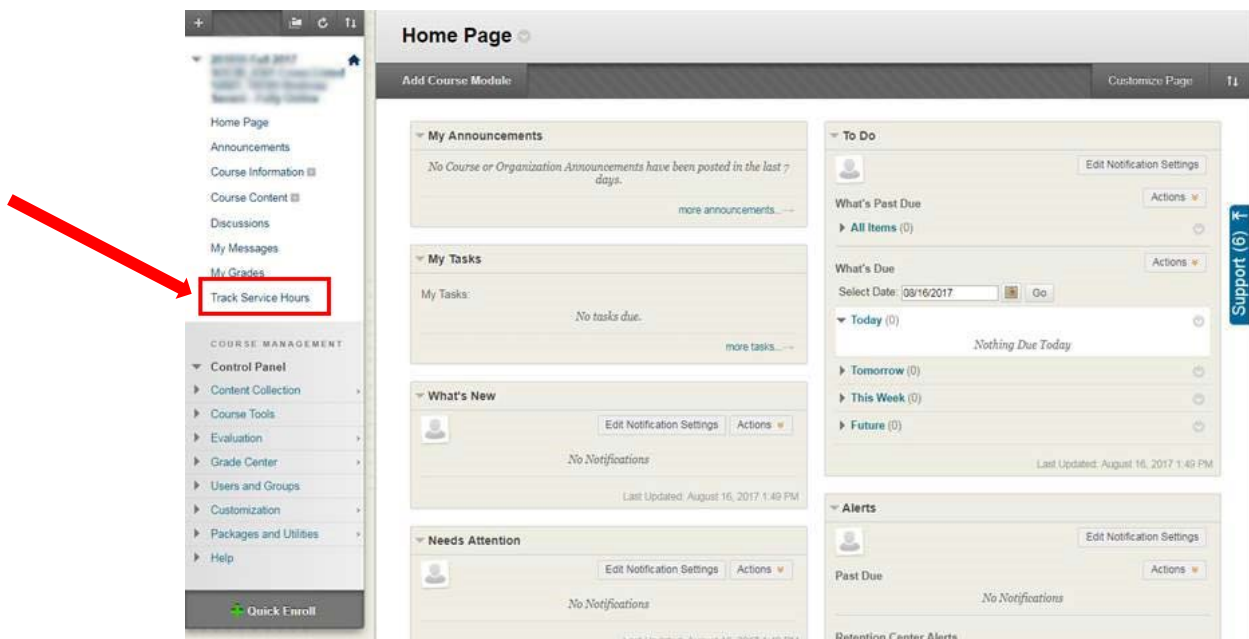
- Navigate to your course page in Blackboard.
  - Select [Service Learning](#) from the left menu if you are in a Service Learning course
  - Select [Track Service Hours](#) if you are in an ACE course

Figure 1. Select [Service Learning](#) if you are in a Service Learning course.



# Tracking Your Service Hours

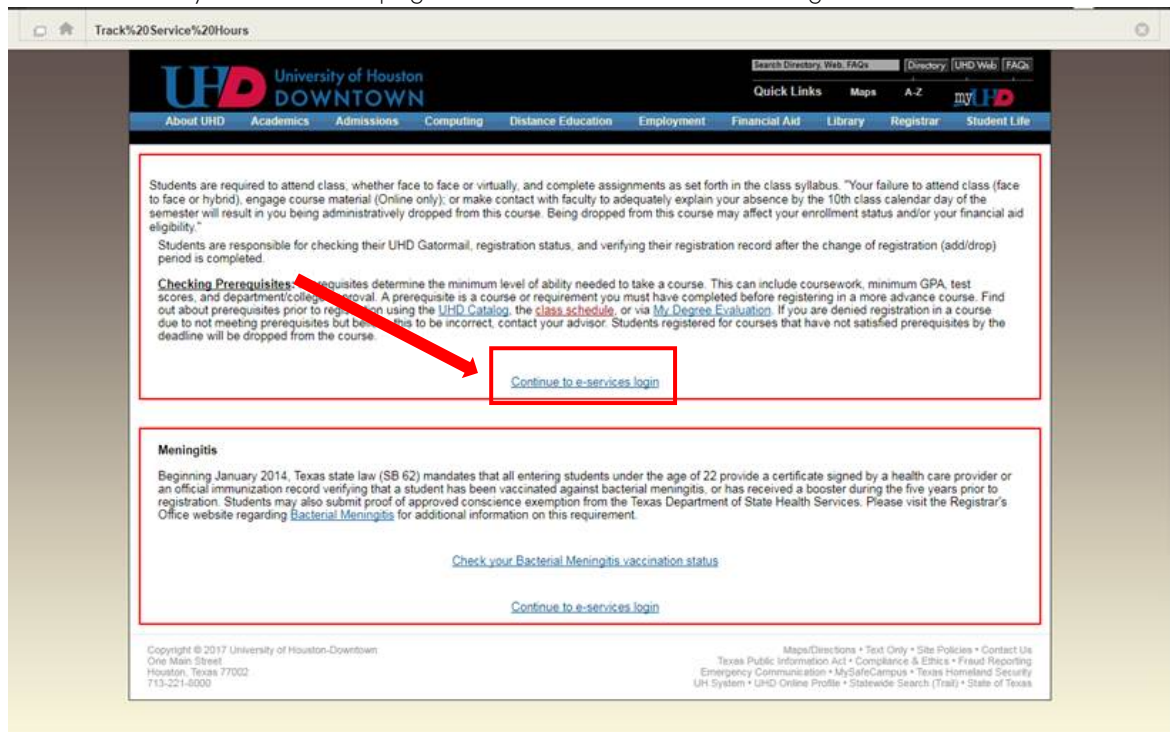
Figure 2. Select Track Service Hours if you are in a Service Learning course.



- Opening this folder will take you to a screen with several options. Select Track Service Hours .

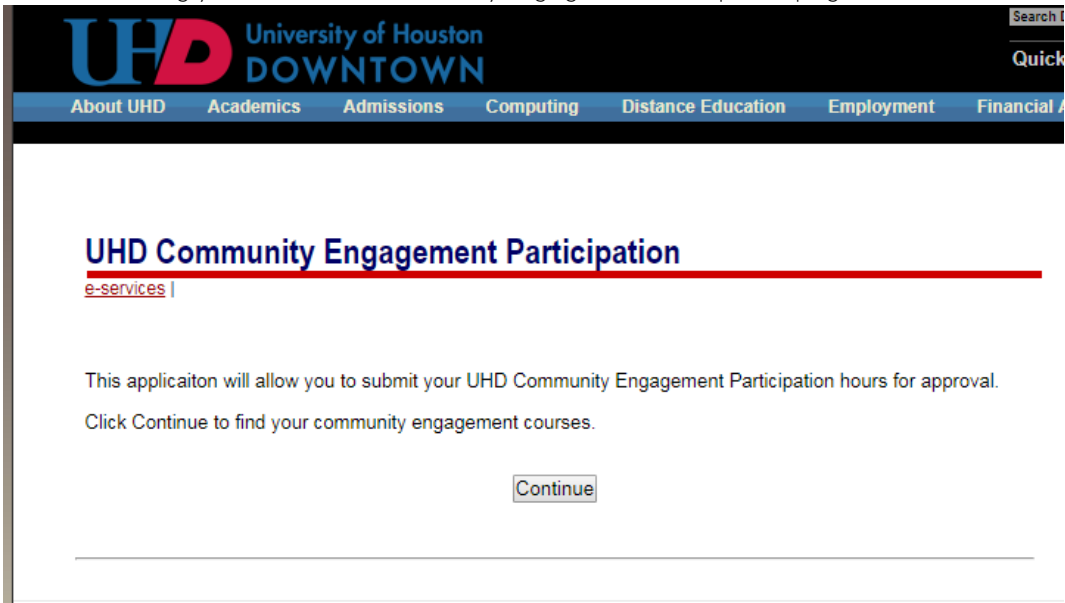


- This link will take you to eServices page. Select Continue to e-services login .

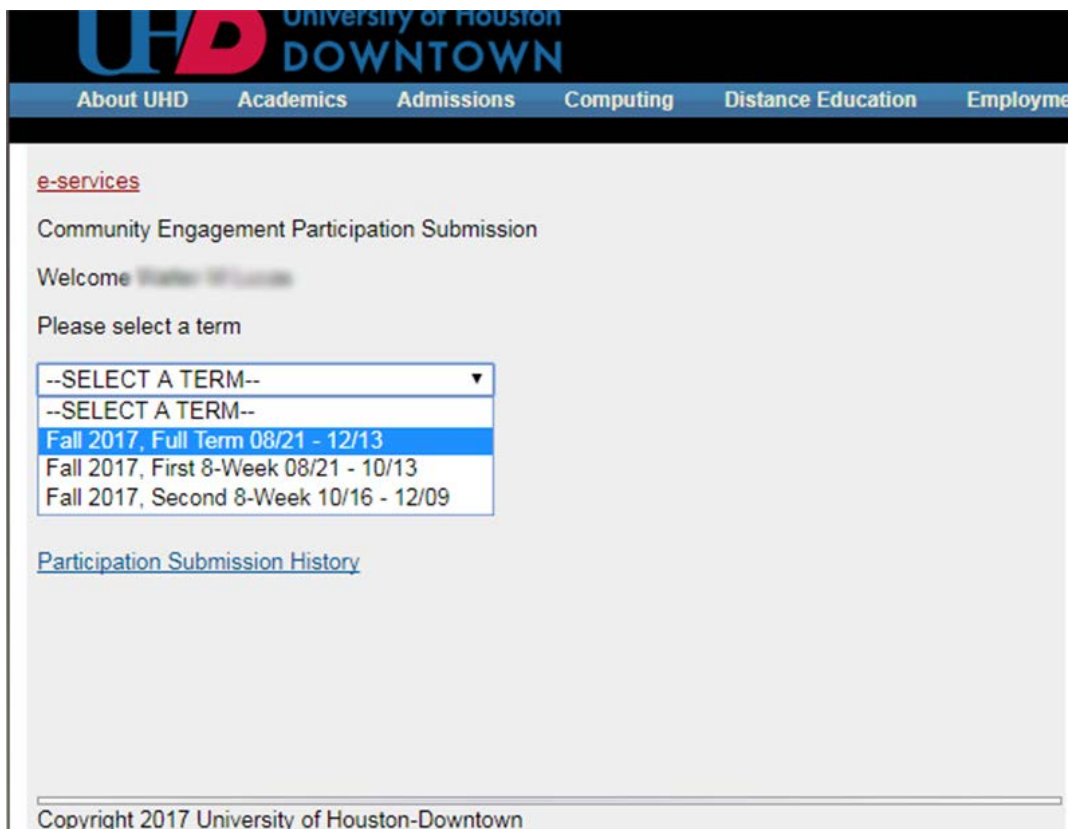




- The link will bring you to the UHD Community Engagement Participation page. Select Continue.



- Use the dropdown box to select the term for which you would like to enter Service Learning hours.



- A list of all of your Service Learning courses and A CE- Involvement courses for that semester should appear below.

**About UHD**   **Academics**   **Admissions**   **Computing**   **Distance Education**

e-services

**Community Engagement Participation Submission**

Welcome **Yvonne W. Lucas**

Please select a term

Fall 2017, Full Term 08/21 - 12/13 ▼

Show my community engagement courses

Subject	Course Number	Course Title	CRN	Participation Submission
BIOL	1310	Human Biology	10028	<a href="#">Enter Participation Details</a>

[Participation Submission History](#)

- Select [Enter Participation Details](#) next to the course for which you would like to submit hours.
- Complete the form that follows which as much information as you have.
  - If you do not see your Partner agency listed, select [Other](#) and type the official name of the organization (no abbreviations or nicknames) into the comments field.
  - If your instructor has asked you NOT to share your community partner, select [Not Disclosed](#)
  - Your participant role will be [Participant](#)
  - If you have a contact person at your partner agency (or if your instructor has asked you to identify someone at the agency who can verify your service), enter their information as the [Reference](#)
  - Select [Content Knowledge](#) for Outcome 1
  - Enter any comments for your instructor or the CCESL staff into the comments box and hit submit.



Add a participation submission

[Select Another Community Engagement Course](#) [Participation Submission History](#)

If you do not see your Community Partner listed here, select 'Other' and type the official name of the organization in the comments field. If your instructor has asked you NOT to share your Community Partner, select 'Not Disclosed'.

Partner agency  \*

Start date  \* e.g., MM/DD/YYYY

End date  \* e.g., MM/DD/YYYY

Total hours  \*

Participant role  \*

Reference name

Reference email address


Reference title

Reference phone

Outcome 1  \*

Comments

- Once your hours have been submitted, you may view your Participation Submission History to verify your hours have been recorded.



[Search Directory, Web, FAQs](#) | [Directory](#) | [UHD Web](#) | [FAQs](#)  
[Quick Links](#) | [Maps](#) | [A-Z](#) | [myUHD](#)

[About UHD](#) | [Academics](#) | [Admissions](#) | [Computing](#) | [Distance Education](#) | [Employment](#) | [Financial Aid](#) | [Library](#) | [Registrar](#) | [Student Life](#)

Participation Submission History  
[Select Another Service Learning Course](#)

id	Term Code	Course CRN	Partner Agency id	Start Date	End Date	Total Hours	Participant Role	Reference Name	Reference Email Address	Reference Title	Referer Phone
2	201810	10028	American Red Cross	06/06/2016	06/06/2016	2	Participant	ref	ref@asdf.com	title	713-000
3	201810	10028	CafeCollege Houston	06/06/2016	06/06/2016	6	Participant	ref	ref@asdf.com	ttsdf	832-000

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 Emergency Communication • MySafeCampus • UHD Online Profile  
 UH System • Statewide Search (Trail) • State of Texas • Texas Homeland Security

# Approving Student Service Hours

To access the link to approve/deny/edit student service hours:

- Select Service Hours from the [Faculty & Staff eServices](#) page. (You can also access the link by clicking [here](#))



- You will be prompted to login to the UHD system through e-services login.

**Legal Notice as Required by the State of Texas**  
Displaying the following notice pertaining to the use of systems in Texas Higher Education entities is required per Texas Administrative Code (Title 1, Part 10, Chapter 202):  
A. Unauthorized use is prohibited;  
B. Usage may be subject to security testing and monitoring;  
C. Misuse is subject to criminal prosecution;  
D. No expectation of privacy except as otherwise provided by applicable privacy laws.

## e-services login

User ID:   
Password:

Use your UHD Network Account and password to log in.  
[Why is my login changing?](#)  
Your Network Account and Password are the same User ID and Password you use to log in to PCs on campus and your UHD e-mail.  
[Forgot password?](#)  
[Change password or update challenge questions](#)

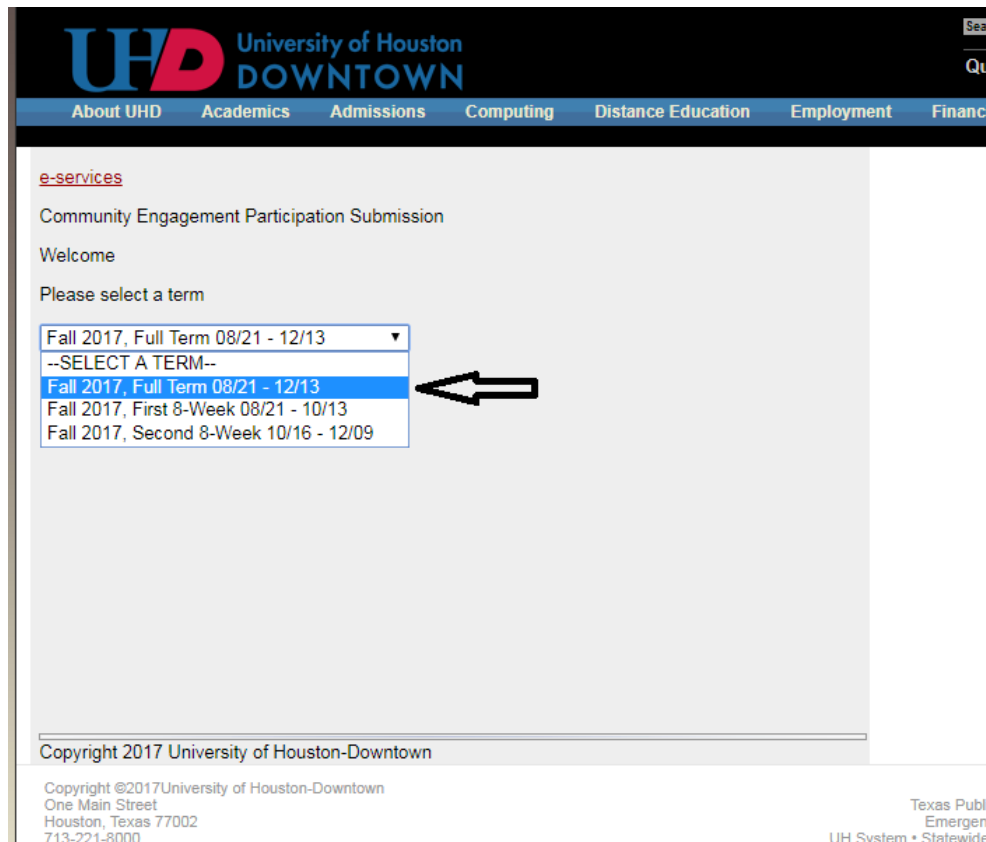
**Note:** To protect your information, the "Back" button has been disabled within e-services. Please use the custom links in blue to navigate.



- Logging in will bring you to the UHD Community Engagement Participation page. Select “Continue”.



- Use the dropdown menu to select the term for which you would like to view Service Hours.



- A listing of all course sections where there are recorded service hours will appear. Select “Enter Participation Details” next to the section you would like to work on.

**UHD University of Houston DOWNTOWN**

About UHD Academics Admissions Computing Distance Education Employment

[e-services](#)

Community Engagement Participation Submission

Welcome

Please select a term

Fall 2017, Full Term 08/21 - 12/13

Show My Service Learning Courses

Term Code	Subject	Course Number	Course Title	CRN	Participation Submission
201810	BIOL	1310	Human Biology	10028	<a href="#">Enter Participation Details</a>

- Select “Edit” next to the participation submission you would like to work on.

**UHD University of Houston DOWNTOWN**

Search Directory, Web, FAQs Directory UHD Web FAQs

Quick Links Maps A-Z myUHD

About UHD Academics Admissions Computing Distance Education Employment Financial Aid Library Registrar Student Life

Modify a student's participation submission

Back to My Service Learning Courses

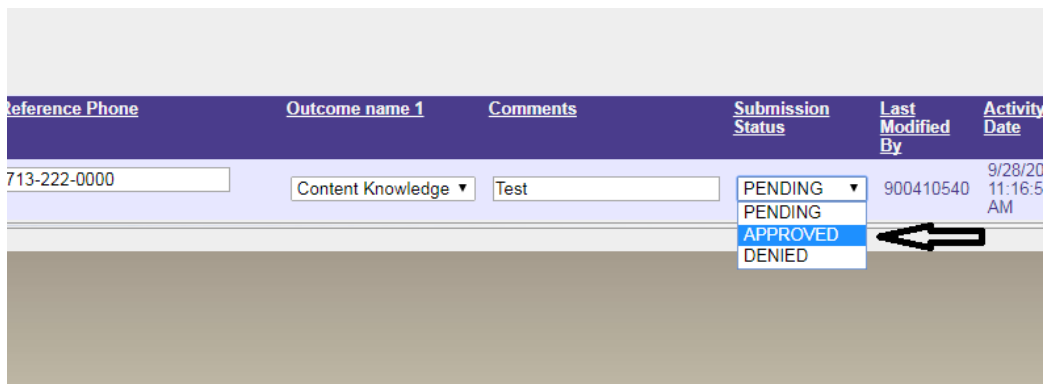
id	userid	Term Code	Course CRN	Partner Agency id	Start Date	End Date	Total Hours	Participant Role	Refer Name
<a href="#">Edit</a> 8	900410540	201810	10028	American Red Cross	09/03/2017	09/03/2017	3	Participant	Mrs. Smith

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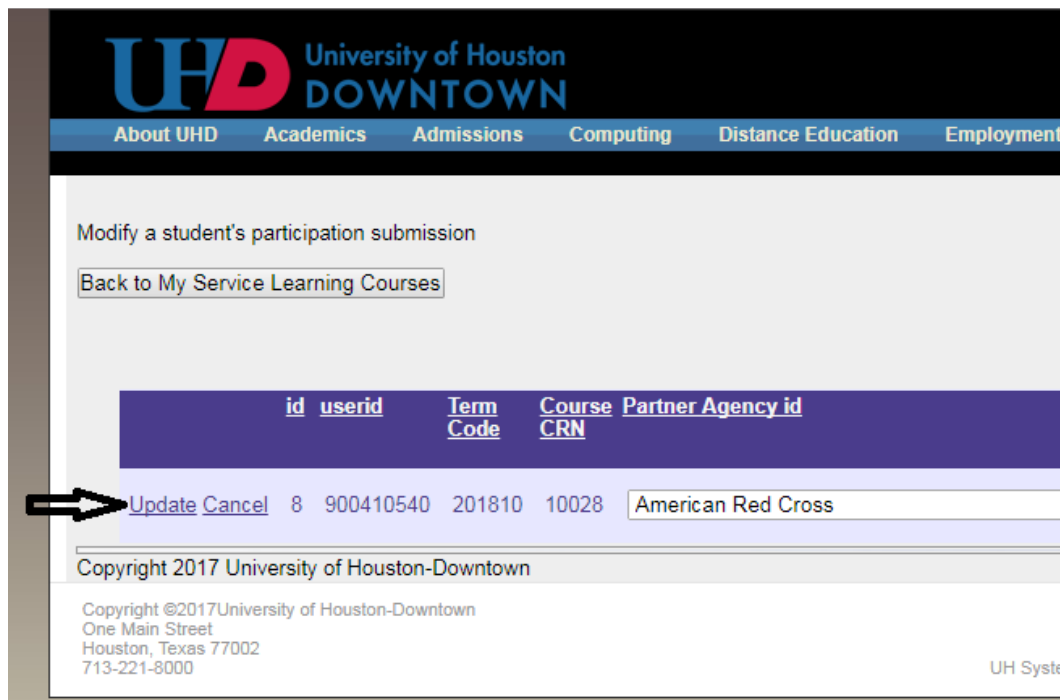
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Emergency Communication • MySafeCampus • UHD Online Profile  
UH System • Statewide Search (Trail) • State of Texas • Texas Homeland Security

- Scroll to the right-hand side of the screen to change the Submission Status using the dropdown menu.



- Once you have modified the Submission Status and are satisfied with the content of the Participation Submission, select “Update” on the left-hand side of the screen.







# Community Partner Platform

The Community Partner Platform is a place to connect UHD Community Partners to faculty and staff for the purpose of completing community projects. The platform allows Community Partners, UHD Faculty, or UHD staff to propose projects for Service Learning courses, A+CE courses or Community Engagement Grants. The Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning will help to match community projects with classrooms and UHD students.

You can access the platform by clicking [here](#). It can also be found on the left-hand side of the CCESL webpage.

## Disclaimer

Inclusion of an organization on the Community Partner Platform does not indicate endorsement by the University of the organization's mission, practices, views, or information included in the organization's linked websites.

While the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CCESL) strives to include only organizations that operate in a safe and non-discriminatory manner, the University makes no representations or warranties regarding those opportunities or organizations not controlled or administered by the University. The University cannot and does not assume any responsibility or liability for any conditions, hazards or risks, or for any related personal injuries or property damage arising directly or indirectly from an individual's participation in activities of these organizations.

Please investigate opportunities and organizations thoroughly before committing, and share any questions or concerns with CCESL staff.

CCESL is under no obligation to include any organization or project within the platform. All proposed projects are subject to approval by CCESL staff before inclusion on the Community Partner Platform.

Matching a UHD faculty or staff member with a partner project does not guarantee a successful project or that the project will come to fruition. As UHD is a teaching institution, quality of final product cannot be guaranteed as all engagement is used as opportunities for student learning. However, the coordinating UHD faculty or staff member will be expected to provide the best quality product possible within reasonable bounds.



## Memorandum of Understanding

Upon mutual agreement to work on a project by both the UHD faculty or staff member, and the Community Partner, herein referred to as “partner,” CCESL highly encourages the use of a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between both parties. A sample MOU can be found in the Suggested Forms & Agreements section of this document.

## Assessment

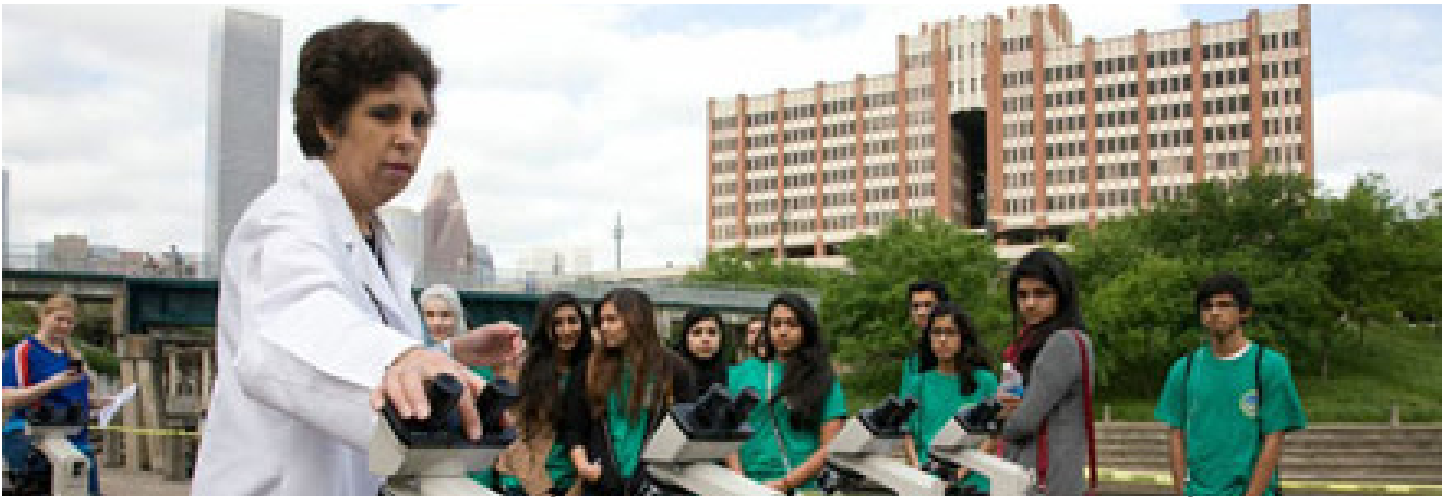
CCESL is committed to the continual assessment and improvement of our programs. To that end, once matched, partners and UHD faculty or staff members will be expected to complete various assessment measures utilized by CCESL as outlined below:

### *UHD Faculty & Staff:*

- [Community Impact Survey](#): This survey helps CCESL gather information about the community engagement activities taking place on the UHD campus. This information is utilized during reporting periods to provide data to various institutions to whom which the University is accountable.
- If participating in A+CE, End of Academic Year Survey at the conclusion of each spring semester.

### *Community Partner*

- If participating in a Service Learning course, Service Learning Partner Satisfaction Survey. Otherwise, Community Partner Satisfaction Survey



# Integrating Community Engagement into an Existing Course

By Joe Bandy, Assistant Director, Center for Teaching at Vanderbilt University

There are many ways to integrate community engagement into an existing course, depending on the learning goals, the size of the class, the academic preparation of the students, and the community partnership or project type.

## **One-time group service projects:**

Some course objectives can be met when the entire class is involved in a one-time service project. Arrangements for service projects can be made prior to the semester and included in the syllabus. This model affords the opportunity for faculty and peer interaction because a common service experience is shared. One-time projects have different learning outcomes than ongoing service activities.

## **Option within a course:**

Many faculty begin community engagement with a pilot project. In this design, students have the option to become involved in the community-based project. A portion of the normal coursework is substituted by the community-based component. For example, a traditional research paper or group project can be replaced with an experiential research paper or personal journal that documents learning from the service experience.



### **Required within a course:**

In this case, all students are involved in service as an integrated aspect of the course. This expectation must be clearly stated at the first class meeting, on the syllabus, with a clear rationale provided to students as to why the service component is required. Exceptions can be arranged on an individual basis or students can transfer to another class. If all students are involved in service, it is easier to design coursework (i.e., class discussions, writing assignments, exam questions) that integrates the service experience with course objectives. Class sessions can involve agency personnel and site visits. Faculty report that it is easier to build community partnerships if a consistent number of students are involved each semester.

### **Action research projects:**

This type of class involves students in research within the community. The results of the research are communicated to the agency so that it can be used to address community needs. Action research and participatory action research take a significant amount of time to build relationships of trust in the community and identify common research agendas; however, community research projects can support the ongoing research of faculty. Extending this type of research beyond the confines of a semester may be best for all involved.

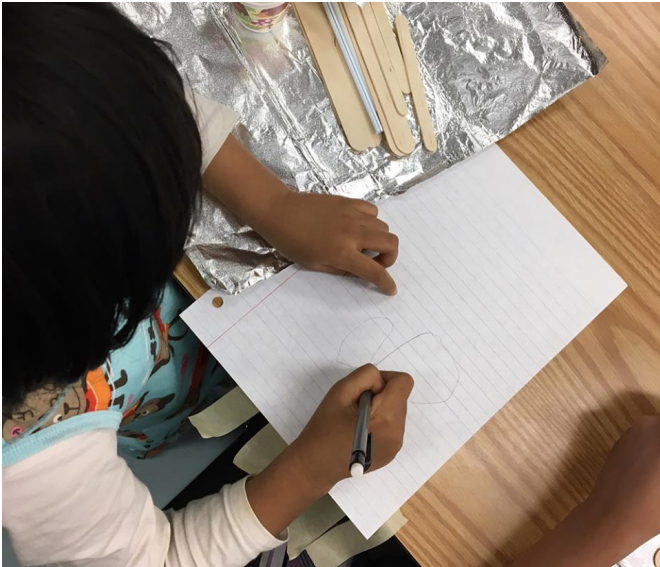
### **Disciplinary capstone projects:**

Community engagement is an excellent way to build upon students' cumulative knowledge in a specific discipline and to demonstrate the integration of that knowledge with real life issues. Upper class students can explore ways their disciplinary expertise and competencies translate into addressing community needs. Other community-based classes within the department can prepare the student for this more extensive community-based class.

### **Multiple course projects:**

Community engagement projects with one or more partners may span different courses in the same semester or multiple courses over a year or longer. These projects must be broad enough to meet the learning goals of multiple courses over time, and because of this they may have a cumulative impact on both student learning and community development that is robust. Such projects may be particularly suited to course clusters or learning communities within or across disciplines, or course sequences, say, within a major, that build student capacity towards advanced learning and community action goals.





# Considerations for Selecting a Service Site

- **Willingness to collaborate**
  - Available for regular communication (i.e., phone calls, meeting)
  - Responsive to mutual problem solving
  - Open to meeting both student needs and agency goals
  - Ability to supervise and interact with college students
- **Agency has adequate resources to orient, train, and monitor students**
  - Designated staff willing to supervise students
  - Procedures to orient and train students
  - Provides necessary space for program needs
  - Procedures to track student attendance and contributions
- **Congruence of learning and service goals**
  - Interest in learning objectives of class or program
  - Flexibility in adjusting service projects to meet learning goals
- **Identification of appropriate service activities and projects**
  - Clearly defines expectations for students
  - Provides direction for project implementation
  - Identify tasks appropriate to the knowledge and skills of students
- **Intercultural sensitivity of agency**
  - Demonstrates culture of respect for diversity
  - Receptive to working with students of different backgrounds and abilities
  - Provides orientation to culture and traditions of agency
- **Accessibility**
  - Near public transportation
  - Location is convenient for students
  - Appropriate compliance with ADA or similar statutes
- **Liability and risk management**
  - Provides information on agency's liability insurance, if applicable
  - Screens students according to agency volunteer guidelines
  - Provides safe and supervised environment for students
  - Provides training on universal precautions, if applicable
  - Provides students with procedures for crisis management

## Service Project Planning Worksheet

Project Title:

Date/Time:

Describe your project in one sentence:

What need in your community or issue will your project address?

What are the goals of the project?

How does the project line up with the course objectives?

What are specific changes you want to make in your community and among your students with this project? List objectives and outcomes for the project.

What skill sets or resources should your students already have that will be helpful to the project?

What will be the site of the service project?

What makes this service site a suitable option for your group?



What resources will you need in order to successfully complete the project?

What reflection activities will you use to help your students process their service experience?

How will these reflection activities support your intended outcomes for your course?

How will the project measure success?

What data will need to be collected in order to measure success?

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY  
APPLICATION & AGREEMENT FOR SERVICE LEARNING COURSE**

**STUDENT INFORMATION**

_____ Student (Legal) Name	_____ Student ID (900-)
_____ Student Gator Email	_____ Phone Number
_____ Course Title	_____ Semester/Year
_____ Course Instructor	

**SERVICE SITE** (If the instructor is selecting the service site, skip to Student Responsibilities)

_____ Name of Agency	_____ Agency Website
_____ Agency Contact Person	_____ Contact Person's Phone #
_____ Agency Address	
_____ City, State, ZIP	

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

**ALL STUDENTS MUST:**

- Be respectful of the agency being served
- Be professional at all times
- Be punctual and dependable
- Be appropriately dressed
- Seek help if in doubt
- Be respectful of the client's privacy
- Complete the required service reflection (as indicated by the course instructor)

**STUDENTS MUST NEVER:**

- Report for service under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Loan or give money or personal belongings to a client
- Give personal information (Phone, address, email) to a client
- Offer commitments to clients or agency that you cannot keep
- Engage in sexual exchanges with client or representative
- Engage in discriminatory behavior against an individual on the basis of age, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability status, or ethnicity.
- Engage in any behavior that could put agency staff or participants in danger or violate ethical, legal or moral standards or university policy.

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY  
APPLICATION & AGREEMENT FOR SERVICE LEARNING COURSE**

Upon review of the guidelines for Student Responsibilities, I agree to adhere to them during my community service learning experience.

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Student Signature

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Date

## **SAMPLE**

### **Memorandum of Understanding**

This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) is entered into and is effective as of [date] by and between the University of Houston-Downtown’s Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CCESL), a center housed with the public institution of higher education of the State of Texas that is located in Houston, Texas and [community partner organization], an institution of [type organization] that is located in [city, state]. UHD and [community partner organization] shall be known collectively as the “Parties” and singularly as “Party” or “Party”.

#### **Recitals**

*Whereas*, cordial relations exist between CCESL and [community partner organization]; and *Whereas*, CCESL and [community partner organization] have discussed mutual goals regarding academic opportunities for students and faculty;

*Now, therefore*, the Parties enter into this MOU, in order to memorialize fundamental concepts regarding the [Service Learning/A+CE] project or program.

#### **Understanding of the Parties**

[Community partner organization] agrees to:

- Possess either general liability coverage or similar insurance for volunteers.
- Communicate with coordinating UHD faculty or staff member regarding any changes in the agreed upon project.
- Complete a brief survey at the end of the project detailing his/her experience as a UHD community partner.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate work environment.

The Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning agrees to:

- Facilitate smooth communication between UHD entity and community partner.
- Support the community partner with information and available resources as necessary.
- Give direction and consultation support on projects as requested.
- Provide ongoing follow-up and support to community partner and UHD faculty or staff.
- Provide course description and student outcomes to community agency.

UHD Service Learning students agree to:

- Be professional, respectful, and compliant of community partner’s policies, standards, and regulations
- Dress appropriately for the service learning program
- Submit a Service Learning reflection at the end of the project.

UHD A+CE students agree to:

- Be professional, respectful, and compliant of community partner’s policies, standards, and regulations
- Dress appropriately for the A+CE program
- Submit a Signature Assignment at the end of the project.



UHD Faculty/Staff/Department agrees to:

- Maintain appropriate communication with community partner regarding project and project status.
- Provide learning outcomes for student participants.
- Maintain appropriate amount of support and education for participants to successfully complete project.
- Complete the Community Impact Survey at the end of the project.

All Parties understand and acknowledge that they are making a significant commitment to this collaborative effort. Accordingly, the Parties agree to expend their best efforts on the design, implementation, and successful continuation of the project or program.

This MOU shall remain effective from the date listed above until the end of the term of five (5) years.

This MOU contains the entire understanding of Parties at this time. If either Party is unwilling or unable to continue with plans for the project or program, that party may do so by sending a written notice of regret to the other party.

*In witness whereof*, the Parties have caused their fully authorized representatives to execute this MOU effective as of the date written above.

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Community Partner Organization] \_\_\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Staff/Faculty Partner] \_\_\_\_\_ Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning \_\_\_\_\_ Date

# Service Learning Assessment Plan

## Service Learning

The University of Houston-Downtown describes service learning as a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities (Learn and Serve America National Service Learning Clearinghouse).

## Service Learning Goals

The goals of the service learning program at the University of Houston-Downtown, are to (1) enhance student academic learning through real-world experiences, (2) increase students' sense of civic identity, (3) provide support to faculty to integrate service learning into their disciplines, and (4) support meaningful projects that positively impact communities.

## Service Learning Outcomes

In order to measure each of the service learning program's goals, learning and program outcomes were identified that, when met, would signify that the goals have been sufficiently accomplished.

### *Student learning outcomes*

- SLO 1 (Required): Students will be able to connect and extend knowledge and skills from their own academic study/field/discipline to the service learning project.
- SLO 2 (Optional): Students will be able to demonstrate evidence of adjustment in their own attitudes and beliefs because of working within and learning from different communities and cultures.

### *Effectiveness outcomes*

- The service learning program will support student academic success.
- The service learning program will progress student attitudes and beliefs about working within and learning from different communities and cultures.
- The service learning faculty development will engage faculty and enhance their ability to integrate service components into their course curriculum.
- The service component of each service learning course will fulfill an indicated community need.
- The variety and breadth of courses and projects offered under the service learning umbrella will encourage student enrollment in those courses.
- Assessment processes for the service learning program will ensure data collection and identification and implementation of interventions designed to enhance student learning.

## SLO Assessment

Each student learning outcome will be measured both directly and indirectly.

### *SLO 1: Direct assessment*

All students enrolled in a service learning designated course must complete the service learning reflection as a part of their course grade. Faculty may choose to assign the common prompt (which will be provided by CCESL) or select other assignment prompts of their choosing which will produce an artifact that can be evaluated using the designated rubric.

A sample of 306 service learning reflections will be assessed by UHD instructors. The sample size was calculated based on the assumption of 1500 students enrolled in service learning courses throughout the fall and spring semesters (derived from historical data) with a confidence level of 95% and  $\pm 5\%$  margin of error.

### *SLO 1: Indirect assessment*

#### IDEA

All UHD students are invited to complete the Individual Development and Educational Assessment (IDEA) survey at the end of each course detailing their experience. Questions ask students to evaluate their progress on many topics. Response choices are:

- No apparent progress
- Slight progress: I made small gains on this objective
- Moderate progress: I made some goals on the objective
- Substantial progress: I made large gains on this objective
- Exceptional progress: I made outstanding gains on this objective

Questions from the IDEA survey have been selected as being relevant to gauging student's success meeting SLO 1. For each of these question items, the success criterion will be that at least 80% of responding students will agree that they have made at least substantial progress.

#### End of course SL student survey

At the end of each semester, students enrolled in SL designated courses are asked to complete an end of course survey. The survey items appear as statements. Students are asked to respond on a Likert scale:

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

The success criterion for this indirect measure is that 75% of students will agree or strongly agree to the selected items deemed relevant to this SLO.

### *SLO 2 (optional): Direct assessment*

All students enrolled in a course that opted into the SLO 2, will be required to complete a photo reflection assignment in addition to their general written reflection. However, there is only one set of assignment prompts for this SLO and they are provided by CCESL.

A sample size of 25% of submitted photo reflections will be assessed by members of the CE/SL committee.

### *SLO 2 (optional): Indirect assessment*

#### IDEA

Questions from the IDEA survey have been selected as being relevant to gauging student's success meeting SLO 2. For each of these questions, the success criterion will be, at least 80% of responding students will agree that they have made at least moderate progress.

ASSESSMENT PLAN FOR STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES			
Assessment Strategy	Success Criterion	Collection & Evaluation	
		Data Collection	Evaluation and Intervention
Outcome: Students will be able to connect and extend knowledge from their own academic study/field/discipline to the service learning project.			
<p><u>Direct Assessment:</u> Rubric-based evaluation of a stratified random sample* of 306 student reflection papers using the <a href="#">Service-Learning Reflection Rubric rating sheet developed and adapted by Kapi'olani Community College.</a></p> <p><u>Indirect Assessment:</u> IDEA: All students are invited to complete the IDEA each semester.</p> <p>End of semester SL student survey. <i>All students enrolled in an SL course are invited to complete a survey each semester.</i></p>	<p>75% of student reflections assessed will score a 2.5 or above.</p> <p>At least 80% of the students completing the IDEA survey in SL courses will report that they have made substantial progress, or better for the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Learning to <i>apply</i> the course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)</li> </ul> <p>At least 75% of students will agree or strongly agree to the following prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Through service learning, I was able to apply the academic content of this course to a real-world situation.</li> <li>o I learn the course content better because of the service learning project.</li> <li>o The service learning project in this course gave me the knowledge and skill that will help me beyond this class</li> </ul>	Each long semester	Annually
(Optional, Pilot) Outcome: Students will be able to discuss the value and benefit of diversity within communities and cultures.			
<p><u>Direct Assessment:</u> Rubric-based evaluation of a stratified random sample* of 25% of student photo reflection responses using a portion of the <a href="#">AAC&amp;U Civic Engagement VALUE rubric.</a></p> <p><u>Indirect Assessment:</u> IDEA: All students are invited to complete the IDEA each semester.</p>	<p>75% of student photo reflections assessed will score a 2.5 or above on the utilized rubric.</p> <p>At least 80% of the students completing the IDEA survey in SL courses will report that they have made moderate progress, or better for the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Developing knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives, global awareness, or other cultures</li> <li>o Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity (music, science, literature, etc.)</li> <li>o Developing ethical reasoning and/or ethical decision making</li> <li>o Learning to apply knowledge and skills to the benefit of others or serve the public good</li> </ul>	Each long semester	Annually

\* Sample artifacts will be stratified by colleges.



ASSESSMENT PLAN FOR EFFECTIVENESS OUTCOMES			
Assessment Strategy	Success Criterion	Collection & Evaluation	
		Data Collection	Evaluation and Intervention
Outcome: Students enrolled in SL courses will collectively achieve a GPA of 2.5 or higher each semester.			
<u>Direct Assessment:</u> IR Reports: Grade reports	At least 80% of the students completing the IDEA survey in SL courses will report that they have made moderate progress, or better for the following items: o Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories)	Each long semester	Annually
<u>Indirect Assessment:</u> IDEA: All students are invited to complete the IDEA each semester.		Each long semester	Annually
Outcome: The service learning program will progress student attitudes and beliefs about working within and learning from different communities and cultures.			
<u>Indirect Assessment:</u> IDEA: All students are invited to complete the IDEA each semester.	At least 80% of the students completing the IDEA survey in SL courses will report that they have made moderate progress, or better for the following items: o Developing knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives, global awareness, or other cultures o Learning to apply knowledge and skills to the benefit of others or serve the public good	Each long semester	Annually
Outcome: The service learning faculty development will engaged faculty and enhance their ability to integrate service components into their course curriculum.			
Faculty participate in professional development.	80% of faculty participating in the SL End of Semester Survey will report having made at least on refinement, change, or addition to their SL course as a result of the development offered by the CCESL staff.	Annually	Annually
Outcome: The service component of each service learning course will fulfill an indicated community need.			
SL Faculty will complete the Community Impact Survey	100% of faculty with an SL designated course will complete the Community Impact Survey at the close of each long semester detailing the impact their service made on the community.	Each long semester	Annually
Service component of faculty SL application to be reviewed rigorously by CE/SL committee.	Each faculty member will provide factual data that supports the need for the service proposed by their course.	Three (3) years	Three (3) years
Outcome: The variety and breadth of courses and projects offered under the service learning umbrella will allow every student the opportunity to enroll in a service learning course irrespective of major.			
IR & Registrar Reports: Enrollment and designation data	At least one section of a compulsory course within each undergraduate degree plan will be SL designated.	Annually	Annually
Outcome: Assessment processes for the service learning program will ensure data collection and identification and implementation of interventions designed to enhance student learning.			
Analysis of the degree to which CCESL is able to: - Manage and sustain the collection and evaluation of data - Identify and implement meaningful change to continually improve student learning related to the SL LO.	100% of data required for the assessment of the service learning program will be collected, assessed and acted upon.  100% of identified interventions will begin implementation within one semester of identification.	Annually	Annually

**Service-Learning Reflection Rubric**

<i>Reflection Prompts (Down)</i> <i>Response Scores (Across)</i>	4	3	2	1	0
A. What did you learn in this course that helped contribute to your service learning project? What did you learn during your service learning project or at your community site that relates to your course?	Skillfully conveys perspectives from the course (and other courses, if applicable) and the community partner site with respect to an audience.	Adequately conveys perspectives from the course (and other courses, if applicable) and the community partner site with some respect to an audience.	Conveys ideas and facts from the course (and other courses, if applicable) and the community partner site that may be related but doesn't explicitly explain their relationship. Demonstrates minimal attention to an audience.	Conveys ideas and facts from the course and community partner site that don't seem to be related. Demonstrates little attention to an audience.	Does not meet level one performance.
B. In what way did your service learning project contribute positively to the community? How did you/your class/your team accomplish your project?	Skillfully explains the problem(s), his/her intervention, his/her process learned from the course and community partner site (decisions, thinking, info literacy, reasoning), and the positive effects of that intervention.	Adequately explains the problem(s), his/her intervention, his/her process learned from the course and community partner site (decisions, thinking, info literacy, reasoning), and the positive effects of that intervention.	Explains most of these: the problem(s), his/her intervention, his/her process learned from the course and community partner site (decisions, thinking, info literacy, reasoning), and the positive effects of that intervention.	Explains some of these: the problem(s), his/her intervention, his/her process learned from the course and community partner site (decisions, thinking, info literacy, reasoning), and the positive effects of that intervention.	Does not meet level one performance.
C. How has your experience during your service learning project affected your thinking about the community, its problems, and the solutions to those problems?	Skillfully explains changes in thinking about the community, its problems, and the solutions to those problems as a result of the service-learning experience (and other related experiences).	Adequately explains changes in thinking about the community, its problems, and the solutions to those problems as a result of the service-learning experience (and other related experiences).	Explains changes in thinking about most of these: the community, its problems, and the solutions to those problems as a result of the service-learning experience (and other related experiences).	Explains changes in thinking about some of these: its problems, and the solutions to those problems as a result of the service-learning experience (and other related experiences).	Does not meet level one performance.
D. What personal, academic or career goals did you achieve? If you do not feel you achieved any, why do you think that is? How has your experience affected your thinking about personal, academic or career goals? How will you serve the community in the future?	Skillfully explains what personal, academic or career goals were accomplished, how the student was changed, and what future service the student plans as a result of the service-learning experience.	Adequately explains what personal, academic or career goals were accomplished, how the student was changed, and what future service the student plans as a result of the service-learning experience.	Explains most of these: personal, academic or career goals that were accomplished, how the student was changed, and what future service the student plans as a result of the service-learning experience.	Explains some of these: personal, academic or career goals that were accomplished, how the student was changed, and what future service the student plans as a result of the service-learning experience.	Does not meet level one performance.

## Service Learning Photo Reflection

Students will be shown a series of five to ten different photographs from their service project (CCESL will work with the SL faculty member to collect photos). Students will first be asked to select a photograph from the series. Next, students will be asked to utilize the selected photo to supplement their response to the first photo reflection prompt. Upon completing this question, students will then be asked to select another photo from the remaining pictures. Similarly, students will then be asked to respond to the second reflection prompt question utilizing the photo for context. This process will continue until students have responded to all five photo reflection prompts.

To preview a sample photo reflection survey, [click here](#).

### Service Learning Photo Reflection Prompts

1. What assumptions or expectations did you bring to this service project? How did they affect what you did or didn't think, feel, decide or do?
2. How did this service project make you feel (positively and/or negatively)? How did you handle your feelings (e.g., what did you do as a result of your feelings)? Should you have felt differently? Why or why not?
3. How did you interpret the thoughts, feelings, decisions, and/or behaviors of others [e.g., How do you think others felt during the project? What assumptions and expectations do you think others brought to the situation (including their assumptions about you)]? What evidence do you have, if any, that your interpretations were or were not accurate?
4. In what ways did you experience difficulties (e.g., interacting with others, accomplishing tasks), and what personal characteristics contributed to the difficulties (e.g., skills, abilities, perspectives, attitudes, tendencies, knowledge)? In what ways did you succeed or do well in the project (e.g. interacting with others, accomplishing tasks, handling difficulties) and what personal characteristics helped you to be successful (e.g., skills, abilities, perspectives, attitudes, tendencies, knowledge)?
5. How did this project challenge or reinforce your values, beliefs, convictions (e.g., your sense of right and wrong, your priorities, your judgments)? Your sense of personal identity (e.g., how you think of yourself in terms of gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, education level, ethnicity, nationality, mental/physical health)?

*Prompts adapted from Ash, Clayton, & Moses. Teaching and Learning through Critical Reflection. Raleigh, NC.*

### Diversity of Communities & Cultures Rubric

	Capstone	Milestones		Benchmark
	4	3	2	1
Diversity of Communities and Cultures	Demonstrates evidence of adjustment in own attitudes and beliefs because of working within and learning from diversity of communities and cultures. Promotes others' engagement with diversity.	Reflects on how own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities. Exhibits curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.	Has awareness that own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities. Exhibits little curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.	Expresses attitudes and beliefs as an individual, from a one-sided view. Is indifferent or resistant to what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.

*Adapted from AAC&U VALUE rubric, Civic Engagement*