SERVICE LEARNING: ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

Reciprocity: The service and learning must be worthwhile and valuable for both the student and the community. There must be reciprocity between the server and those served.

Reflection: Intentional, systematic reflection about the experience must take place in order to accomplish critical thinking in community service experiences. Reflection of the service learning experience encourages introspection of other aspects of the student's life, thereby promoting learning before, during and after the service.

Meaningful service: Service tasks need to be worthwhile and challenging in order to strengthen students' critical thinking.

Diversity: A priority is placed on involving a broad cross-section of students working in diverse settings and with a diverse population within the community.

Sustainability: For Service Learning projects to truly make a difference, long-term benefits to the community, students, and faculty should be considered with every community engaged course.

Asset Building Model of Service Learning: In its early years, Service Learning sought to aid community partners and community members by ascertaining their needs and working to fulfill those needs. This needs-based model of service provides temporary solutions to problems that are potentially societal in their scope. An asset building approach to Service Learning seeks to find ways to assess and then increase the assets of community organizations and their constituents with the goal of seeking long-term and even permanent solutions.