FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q. Why should I teach a Service Learning course?

A. Benefits over and above a traditional course include the following:
   - Students learn not only from the instructor, but from community partners, community partner clients and constituents, and from each other through their experience in their service;
   - Service promotes a different type of critical thinking skill, including moral and ethical development;
   - Students’ understanding of practical applications of academic pursuits and multicultural values and traditions is enhanced;
   - Retention is raised significantly from traditional lectures and reading when students are engaged in practicing by doing and through immediate use
   - The community benefits by collaborative and creative problem solving while participating in student learning;
   - Students and instructors provide meaningful service to the community while learning more about community needs;
   - Students and instructors learn to synthesize and assess learning opportunities that involve multiple modes of expression;
   - The instructor learns new methods of encouraging students’ academic progress and comprehension; and
   - New methods of instruction may lead to new research and publication opportunities.

Q. I sometimes feel that I have little time to complete my traditional course; how can I fit in Service Learning as well?

A. Service Learning is integrated into your curriculum not as an add-on but as an integral feature of your course. Instead of an additional text, for example, you might opt for a form of more dynamic information processing that service-learning provides.

The Center for Community Engagement and the Associate Director of Academic Community Partnerships are available five days a week twelve months of the year as resources to take much of the logistical burden of the course instructors and community partners. However, for this service to be effective, you must start to plan Service Learning projects six to nine months in advance of the beginning of the course to allow for community partner and project development.

Q. It sounds interesting, but how do I learn how to teach such a course properly?

A. This handbook is a start. Also, reflecting on your course and your goals two quarters ahead of the one in which you would like to teach a Service Learning course will provide adequate time to properly prepare for such a course.
Specific questions can be addressed to the Associate Director of Academic Community Partnerships who will also make the connection between faculty and community partner. Attending breakfasts and workshops on service-learning that are offered at UC and other institutions are additional ways to learn more and to make valuable connections with other faculty and potential partners.

While any new course can produce some anxiety, most faculty report a steep learning curve in which confidence develops fairly rapidly once the course is underway. The good news is that as students engage in service activities, they are also taking an active role in their learning, a role shared in part by the community partners.