PLANNING AND COURSE DEVELOPMENT
In planning for your Service Learning course, the following are standard academic criteria and learning outcomes that should be considered in relation to your specific course and discipline:

**ACADEMIC CRITERIA FOR SERVICE LEARNING**

The community-based Service Learning experience must include supervision, monitoring, support, recognition, and evaluation to meet service and learning goals. The criteria for courses should include the following:

- There must be a non-classroom component that provides service to the community agency, students, and the university a service that meets a genuine community need;
- The service must be closely related to the subject matter of the course and the knowledge from the discipline should inform the service experience and be drawn through the service experience;
- The instructor must specify basic expectations for the amount and kind of service students are asked to engage in;
- The instructor must provide methods and opportunities to the student for critical reflection on the service experience and relation of their experiences to the subject matter of the course;
- Credit is given for the learning derived from the service experience and its relation to the course content and goals. A final product, such as a paper, activity, or project, should incorporate the Service Learning component which can then be evaluated for course credit; and
- There must be an ongoing opportunity for the agency and its representatives to participate in the evaluation of the students and the service rendered.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR SERVICE LEARNING COURSES**

Service learning courses, in addition to their specific content-based learning goals, should include the following learning outcomes. Students should be able to:

- Identify the context of the service organization where they have provided service;
- Relate course-based theories and conceptual frameworks to the service in which they have been engaged;
- Identify and have respect for the role of diversity within the community;
- Reflect upon service and its relationship to their own lives and to their future careers; and
- Assess the role of civic responsibility in relation to the academic goals of their course.
CREATING A SERVICE LEARNING COURSE

Two quarters before the course begins, faculty should complete the following:

- Review the Service Learning resources at www.uc.edu/sl including the Community Partner and Student handbooks, the list of potential community partners, and the various links including sample policies and syllabi.
- Complete the worksheet on “Connecting Course Objectives to Service Learning” to consider, define, and begin to plan for the specific role Service Learning will play in your course.
- Meet with the Associate Director of Academic Community Partnerships to further discuss your objectives and to consider which community partners might best fit your course needs.
- Develop a preliminary course syllabus.

One quarter before the course begins, faculty should consider the following:

Regarding Course Policies and Syllabus:

- Course Objectives and Learning Goals: List two or three measurable objectives and goals you anticipate being available through Service Learning.
- Course Description: Be sure that your students are aware of the Service Learning component; e.g., put information about the Service Learning component in writing, even if all students are not required to become involved. Identify whether or not Service Learning will be extra credit, an alternative to a traditional project, or a requirement for course completion. This information can be made available to students signing up for the course through Blackboard or Course Offerings.
- Syllabus: Identify ways in which to integrate the various activities related to the Service Learning component into your class days, including readings related to Service Learning, time in class to discuss the Service Learning objectives and practicalities, time in class for verbal and written reflection, and time for assessment.
- See links on assessment, diversity issues, the reflection process and sample policies and syllabi.

Regarding Community Partners:

- Once the community partners have been agreed upon and contacted by the Associate Director of Academic Community Partnerships, confirm that they have a current Community Partner Guide to Service Learning.
- Provide the partner with and/or collect from the partner any necessary forms not already provided from the Service Learning office.
- See the links to the Asset Model of Community Partner Development.
Confirm specific expectations and roles of the Service Learning coursework, including:

- Goals and objectives of the course;
- Number of students involved;
- Level of input required from partner, including supervision, time, and evaluation;
- Types of skills students will be bringing to the partnership; and
- Desired impact on the community.

**During the course quarter:**

**Sample Weekly Task List for Service Learning Courses:**

In a ten-week quarter, this is one possible way to include those activities that, depending on your particular course, may need to be included. Flexibility is important; your own course needs and those of the students may require very different accommodations of time and other course assignments.

**Week One:**

- Distribute policies and syllabi and any Service Learning related readings
- Explain guided reflection and its role in this course
- Hand out information on community partners and possible service activities
- Invite community partners to give presentations and provide schedules
- Discuss steps for securing placement, including timetables and deadlines
- Begin reviewing with students, and have them read and sign, all appropriate forms including any Background Check forms and the appropriate Emergency Treatment Authorization and Release forms. Such forms should be discussed carefully in class so that students understand the meaning of the form they are signing

**Week Two:**

- Students must choose partnerships and set up interviews no later than this or the third week
- Continue to review and have students read and discuss with them any necessary forms including the Service Learning Student Contract.
- Students should visit on-site locations

**Week Three:**

- Students begin Service Learning experience with the community partner
- Guided discussions and reflections about the community service begin and continue at regular intervals throughout the quarter. See additional information on the reflection process
Week Four:
- Recommended Service Learning site visit by faculty for review of progress and to check-in with community partner
- Ongoing reflection activities

Weeks Five – Eight:
- Contact site supervisor for feedback on student performance and to check in for any questions or concerns
- Ongoing reflection activities

Weeks Nine – Ten:
- Students should submit paper, project, or presentation which summarizes and reflects on their Service Learning activities
- Complete evaluation of Service Learning experience through connections with community partner, students, and Service Learning office.

Post-Course Activities, Including Faculty Reflection and Opportunities:
- Send thank-you letters to the community partners with whom your students have worked;
- Consider what did and did not work well in relation to your Service Learning component. Was this related more to instructor, student, or community partner involvement or some other aspect? If this is a concern, consider how it can be improved for the next course.
- Provide evaluative feedback to the Associate Director of Academic Community Partnerships
- Consider publication of your work in this or a subsequent course. See the various links for more on relevant conferences and journals.
**CONNECTING COURSE OBJECTIVES TO SERVICE LEARNING—WORKSHEET**

**Course Title:** ________________________________________________________________

*Completing this in advance of your course may help guide the process of more clearly defining the Service Learning component of your course, identifying potential community partners, and writing your syllabus.*

**General Course Policies:**

What current course objectives are related to service?
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  

What are some valid reasons for students to utilize Service Learning in relation to my course objectives? What should my students receive from this experience?
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  

What type of community sites would be appropriate for the course (e.g., nursing homes, homeless shelters, public schools, etc.)?
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  

How will Service Learning be incorporated into the course (e.g., required, primary with an optional alternative, optional, extra credit)?
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  

How many hours will be required for Service Learning?
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  

What hours will be dedicated for this purpose, in terms of class hours and hours outside of the classroom?
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________________________________
Worksheet continued

What will be the deadlines for placement, confirmation, various coursework, reflection, and assessment?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

How will the information and significance regarding Service Learning be provided to students?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Anticipated Service Learning statement on the syllabus:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Evaluation Criteria:

What means of reflection will be utilized (e.g., journal entries, essays, discussion groups)?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

How will reflection in various formats be evaluated?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

What standards and tools will I use to evaluate individual learning that has occurred?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

How is Service Learning itself graded (e.g., for completion of the project, point system for various aspects of service, etc.)?
____________________________________________________________________________________