



FACULTY GUIDE:

Creating and Implementing an International Service-Learning Course

Part 1: Find out the Who, What, Where, When and How's of creating service-learning courses abroad.

Part 2: Follow 3 steps to best practices of implementing international service-learning courses.

Brought to you by CUPS:

The Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning

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Faculty Guide Part 1: How to Create an International Service-Learning Course at UVM

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“Transform classroom lessons from abstract discussions into real live concepts and issues.”

-International Service-Learning – A Critical Guide from an Impassioned Advocate

This Guide is to assist faculty in answering the Who, What, Where, When and How’s of creating service-learning courses abroad. It is designed as a general guideline for most Faculty-Led Programs Abroad (FLPA). In it you will find:

- ✓ *UVM Resources that can assist faculty in their program and curriculum development*
- ✓ *How Service-Learning is beneficial to you, the students, and the communities with whom you work*
- ✓ *The right steps to take when thinking about proposing an International Service-Learning course*
- ✓ *What to consider when choosing a travel destination and community partner*
- ✓ *Ways to start thinking about the logistical pieces of this experience*

Although this guide applies to most FLPA courses, please check with your department about any other arrangements. To learn how to get your class started, refer to the CUPS best practices guide titled, “3 Steps to Implementing an International Service-Learning Course.”

WHAT benefits will an International Service-Learning Course have?

Service-Learning has a way of enhancing curriculums through deeply meaningful and practical applications that have a long-lasting impact on students. Studying Service-Learning in an international context will help students bring these learning experiences into a global perspective.

How Service-Learning Benefits...

Students: Gain transferable skills; apply lessons from class in an international and practical context; grow personally and academically

Faculty/Instructor: Pursue research, travel, and educational goals; enhance knowledge, networks, and experience in other cultures

Community: Receives needed service and support; increases morale; heightens visibility; enhances networks and partnerships with university

Everyone: Broadens world perspective, stimulates new questions and exploration, deepens cultural awareness and sensitivity

Some text adapted from ISL - A critical guide from an impassioned advocate, p. 860

Successful Examples of UVM-Sponsored International Service-Learning

Investing in Natural and Human Capital in Ethiopia:

Students conduct an ecological economic assessment of critical ecosystem services that can support sustainable economic growth and poverty alleviation in Awassa.

Sustainable Development in Small Island States, St. Lucia:

Students collaborate with the community to integrate ecological sustainability, social justice and economic efficiency. They work on issues related to consumer affairs and small enterprise development.

From de-militarization to re-development in

Vieques, Puerto Rico: Students work with local activists to develop maps for sustainable development initiatives.

Community and International Economic

Transformation, Honduras: Students work on a variety of projects that apply models of economic development and explore policy approaches to promote social welfare and sustainable development.

WHO can help answer my questions?

UVM Resources

- CE (Continuing Education) - www.uvm.edu/~learn - 656-2085
 - Partners with OIE in program creation, course marketing, and curricular development
 - Keeps track of registration process to ensure class will run
 - Responsible for faculty salary/compensation
- CUPS (Community-University Partnerships & Service-Learning) - www.uvm.edu/~partners - 656-0095
 - Assists with collaboration and partnership building
 - Helps you and your students make connections between service and learning
 - Provides training for faculty to integrate service-learning into their coursework and learning outcomes
 - Recruits, trains, and compensates Teaching Assistants for course support
 - Awards grant funding to assist faculty in initial course preparation
 - Maintains resource library for accessible information, research and assessment
- OIE (Office of International Education) - www.uvm.edu/~oies - 656-4296
 - Serves as main contact and information “base” for study abroad programs
 - Offers services to help faculty with budgeting and travel planning
 - Provides information regarding risk management, health & safety, liability, travel, and cultural engagement
 - Can provide faculty training/orientation if needed
- UVM Travel Services - www.accenttravel.com/uvm/
- Global and Medical Travel Assistance - www.internationalsos.com
- UVM Travel Health Clinic – Nancy Carney - 656-3350
- U.S. Government Travel Website - <http://travel.state.gov/>
- Risk Management Policies (Visit CUPS webpage and click on *Liability, Legality & FAQ*)

Hear it from your Colleagues!

on PARTNERSHIPS

“Patience, persistence and communication – expect the unexpected.”

-Julie Richards

on SERVICE

“Choosing service-learning projects is a balance between student interests, course requirements, and partner needs.”

- Gary Flomenhoft

WHERE is the best location for an International Service-Learning opportunity?

Things to Consider...

- Health & safety issues
- Seasonal weather conditions
- Political climate
- Visa requirements
- Modes of transportation
- Meals/food options
- Is group airfare available?
- Length of travel time
- Communities that complement your learning goals
- Expense rates
- Hosting options
- Condition of lodging & accommodations
- Cultural circumstances
- Risk Management
- Transportation Policies
- Van License
- Multiple destinations
- Reciprocal and sustainable partnerships
- Affordability of traveling options



WHEN should I start planning?

- First, be sure to get approval from your academic department and to ask about financial support.
- Meet with the Study Abroad Advisor in the Office of International Education (OIE) to gather information about submitting a proposal 18 months in advance.
- Submit your proposal to OIE by the established deadline, usually a year in advance. This will allow the proper timeline for advertising, registration, and budgeting. Consider students' financial aid process and their academic calendars.
- Meet with CE to discuss a budget proposal one year to 18 months in advance. They will provide guidance and a budget template.
- Talk to the CUPS office about having a Service-Learning Teaching Assistant a semester in advance.

HOW do I get started?

Details to Consider:

Cost – Are there available scholarships? Is my destination on the expensive side? Will we need to fundraise?

Timing – Will this course take place during the semester? Winter Break? Summer?

Distance – How far and to how many locations will we travel? Are there time restraints?

Relationship – Is this a community/location that will likely develop sustainable and lasting partnerships? Are there host families available? What is the community like? Is there a potential to return again?

Current Issues – Is this area safe? Is there information I should gather about the political climate? What should the students know before we arrive?

Construction – Are there barriers or unknowns that will change our plans or impede our travels?

Communication – How long will it take to initiate contact and get responses? How will communication work before the service project and during it?

Health Issues – Do students need to be vaccinated? Is there a local hospital or clinic near our site? Are there health and safety issues my students should know about?

Size of Group – What would an appropriate class size be? How many people can the community accommodate? Do I need support from another instructor or a Service-Learning Teaching Assistant? (If so, contact CUPS) CE requires 9 or more students; OIE has no minimum or maximum number of students.

Type of Service – What types of service would best compliment the coursework? What practical experiences or cultural contexts will benefit students most?

Travel Issues – What types of visas will you or your students need? Are any of your students non-U.S. citizens?

Course Options – Will students earn academic credit? What department will “house” this course?

Goals of the Program/Course – What transferable skills do I want the students to learn? What lessons should the students “bring home”? How does the course content connect to service?

Student selection – Is this geared toward a particular student population? (Graduate students; First-year students; certain majors?) Should there be an application process? How should it be marketed?

Deadlines: When should students be notified of this opportunity? Will I have enough time to recruit and select students, and solidify my travel plans?



Faculty Guide Part 2:

Steps for Implementing an International Service-Learning Course at UVM

Brought to you by CUPS: The Office of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning

Help your students develop global awareness and a heightened understanding of social change.

Before the Experience: P R E P A R A T I O N

Envisioning the Experience

- Determine how much time is needed to effectively serve and complete comprehensive projects.
- Ask yourself:
 - Is the service useful and needed in the area?
 - How are the projects beneficial to both the community partner and student?
 - What are the learning goals for your course, and how does service help to meet them?
 - What is the experience trying to accomplish?
 - What type of follow-up is needed after the experience?
- Try to create opportunities for students to meet influential people (high chiefs, activists, government officials, etc.) as well as locals in the community. A varied mix will make for a diverse experience.
- Sign up for and participate in the CUPS Faculty Fellows training.



Communicating with Partnerships

- Identify and clarify the community partner's need before you start. Ask questions to get clearer ideas.
 - Are there resources and/or skills that this community does not have that we could offer? Would these go against the grain of the culture?
 - Are there alternative ways the community problem solves?
 - Are there underlying issues pertaining to the culture or environment there?
 - Who will we be working with? Does this service require any training or supervision?
 - Are there supplies that would need to be funded that should be brought?
 - How can we sustain a partnership beyond this experience?
- Decide what means of communication you will use while planning and how it might change once you arrive. Do you or your partner have access to phone or email? How will traveling arrangements work once you are there?
- Consider limitations in language and literacy. Are there community advocates that could assist you?
- Create a partnership agreement (either literal or sometimes verbal communication) that clearly states the expectations of each partner and share it with them. If possible, what can you "promise"? This will help to clarify any mutual expectations, unknowns, and provides talking points if needed ahead of time or during the service.
- Beware of irregular communication from international partners. As communication differs between cultures, try to stress what is especially important to know. Expect a much longer response rate between you and your partner. Initiate communication early on to ensure your deadlines are met.

Planning the Logistics

- Decide how students will be assigned to certain projects by identifying specific roles and responsibilities. Will there be team leaders? Are there incentives for students to get involved?
- Map out the experience day by day. Set up day-by-day scheduling arrangements as best as possible, allowing for changes.
- Keep your community partner updated about your plans. Also keep checking on the status of the community you will be serving and how any changes may affect your arrangements.

Gathering Resources

- Find the experts on campus – use university and community resources to provide information or support (CUPS can help with these connections – see Faculty Guide 1).
- Determine if there are materials needed for service and if they will be supplied. If not, consider if you need additional funding (explore CUPS or OIE grant opportunities; search for off-campus funding).
- What devices or equipment will be available to your class? What should you take care of before leaving?
- Determine your key contacts in the country. Be ready to develop ongoing relationships with people who know the community and who you can trust.

Generating a Syllabus

- Think about what topics and projects will be covered and how they will fit the timeline.
 - Should students read certain materials before leaving?
 - Are there discussions that can be complimented by onsite work?
 - Would it be beneficial for students to present a final project to the community, or work on it when they return?
- Brainstorm how the academic learning will be integrated into service abroad.
 - How will students apply their skills? What skill sets will they gain or enhance?
- Create activities that make connections between learning goals and service experience.

Activities that connect learning goals and service experience may include:

- Museums
- Field stations
- Medical clinics
- Student teaching
- In-country NGO's
- Interviews
- Lectures
- Field trips
- Interaction with the local people
- Business and political site visits
- Embassy and governmental presentations



Holding First Class Meetings

- Have students reflect on stereotypes or misconceptions about the new community they'll be entering, as well as their perception of the U.S. Remind them to be aware of personal biases and cultural differences.
 - How do they think these assumptions may be challenged? How will they describe their home to others?
- Strongly encourage or require students to keep a journal documenting their experience and thoughts. This will be a key tool for recalling learning experiences and reflecting.
- Give students a comprehensive overview of travel plans and curriculum for the trip. Be clear about expectations and how time will be spent while there.
- Dedicate a significant amount of time to addressing travel issues like health and safety information, social issues of the community, and culture shock.
- Agree as a class on rules pertaining to conduct and behavior. For example, how will age limits affect the group? What is the expectation of professionalism? How might disrespectful conduct affect the group or the experience? *Emphasize this is NOT a vacation; it is an academic course and students are part of a learning community.
- Focus on teambuilding before the trip – then students are less likely to section off and are more prepared to work as a team (ex: group activities; ropes course; informal class time).

Setting Class Expectations

- Have a conversation about expectations of behavior on the trip, and how it may change according to the context.
- Ask:
 - How will the group work to honor the customs and practices of the new community?
 - What rules or expectations exist there that are unlike rules or expectations here? For instance, are there nightly curfews in the communities in which you will be staying?
 - Are there different age limits in regard to alcohol consumption?
 - Do students have a particular role in the community?
 - Do the consequences of certain acts differ as you change settings?
- Agree on group expectations.
 - How will behavior or particular incidents affect the communities you are serving?
 - What impact will an individual's behavior have on their own learning? On the group's learning?
 - How will the class take a group responsibility for addressing problems?
 - How do individuals within the group deal with conflict?
- Make sure students are aware of UVM policies regarding travel abroad.



During the Experience: ACTION & REFLECTION

Dealing with Culture Shock

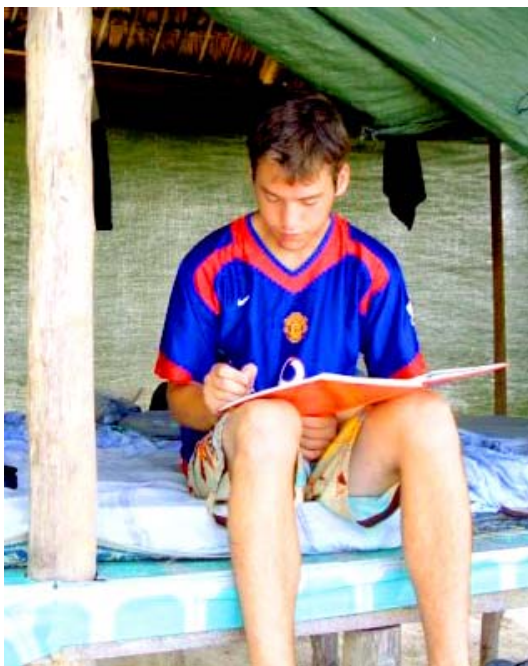
- Encourage students to be open with attitudes, approaches, and actions.
- Create a safe space for open discussions about the group's experiences.
- Be cautious about the ways you enter and take part in the community. Cultures differ greatly in value systems. For instance, certain cultures view money and economic privilege differently. Therefore, charitable 'giving' can be viewed as either positive or negative acts.
- Follow community-based principles if possible, rather than bringing in "your own".

Connecting Service to Learning

- Actively look for ways to connect the service experiences to learning goals.
- Examine how this experience is reciprocal and beneficial for both partner and students.
- Think about what issues or needs are at hand and how these factors affect students' learning.
- Provide structured opportunities for students to reflect critically on their service experience.
- Remember to maintain the academic integrity of the course.

Maintaining Community Partnerships

- Keep lines of communication open throughout your trip.
 - Refer to your partnership agreement and communicate any unmet expectations or problems.
 - Have frequent check-ins with your partner, in order to resolve any unmet needs or expectations.
- Invite your community partner to take part in reflection with the group, and join in learning activities.
- Talk about "What's next?" throughout the trip. How can this collaboration work in the future?



Promoting Active Reflection

- Have daily check-ins and allow students the freedom and time to reflect on their experience.
- Encourage students to write in a journal daily if feasible.
- Take interest in the discussions students are having among themselves to gain a broader understanding of what interactions have had particular impact.
- Create structured opportunities for students to reflect on their experiences. Offer prompting questions for individual reflection, or bring group experiences into class discussions.

After the Experience: R E I N T E G R A T I O N & E V A L U A T I O N

Bringing it Back: Re-Entry

- Hold one or more post-trip meetings to have final discussion and sharing of projects and experiences.
- Consider: What tangible skills have students learned or improved? How do these learning experiences apply at home? What aspects of culture shock are we experiencing?

Evaluation

- Think about how this experience worked toward meeting your learning goals.
 - What about the experience could be changed or enhanced to meet them?
 - Did this experience provide unexpected skill-building or learning experiences? Should these be incorporated into the next experience?
 - How did the partnership complement your learning goals and benefit your students? Was it a reciprocal working relationship?
 - What would you change or improve in the future?
- Ask your partner for an evaluation from their point of view. Ask them:
 - Should certain processes, communication lines, or responsibilities shift or change?
 - What worked and what didn't work? What would they do differently next time?
 - How was the service to the community helpful? Did they feel the relationship was reciprocal? Contact the CUPS office for sample evaluations.

What's Next?

- Provide resources to students about how to get or stay involved in the issue and/or service-learning efforts, especially through connections to local opportunities.
- Keep in contact with your community partnership to evaluate and assess the experience, and talk about future options.

General Considerations for Faculty:

- Think of service-learning as pedagogy rather than as class content.
- Organize the service-learning experience according to the immediate issues of the partner's community, such as the geography, history, customs and values.
- Determine what tangible skills the students should gain from the experience, like particular learning goals or project completion, certificate completion, new or enhanced skill sets, etc.
- Be open to reflecting and sharing with the students while maintaining your faculty role.
- Be prepared for uncertainty and variation in both the experience and student learning outcomes.



Some content adapted from various sources, including: International Education and International Service-Learning at the University of Vermont Report, 2006; Promising Practices of International Service and Service-Learning (N.C. Campus Compact); Introduction to Service-Learning Toolkit (Campus Compact); Intercultural Service-Learning: Basic Principles, 2003; International Service-Learning: A Critical Guide From an Impassioned Advocate, 2000; CUPS documents.