

**PROPOSAL FOR SERVICE-LEARNING COURSE DESIGNATION APPROVAL**  
Service-Learning (S)

Department:  
Course Number and Title:  
Credit Hours:  
Course Description:  
Prerequisites:  
Credit Restrictions (*if any*):  
Frequency of Course Offering:  
Course Capacity per Semester: (*per course & total if multiple sections*)  
Contact Name, Phone, Email:

**Service-Learning (S) Standards:** Service-learning is a course-based experiential learning strategy that engages students in meaningful and relevant service with a community partner while employing ongoing reflection to draw connections between the service and course content. When implemented according to the below standards of best practice, service-learning can enhance academic learning, promote civic responsiveness, and strengthen communities. Find information about planning and implementing a service-learning course at UT on the Office of Service-Learning website at <http://servicelearning.utk.edu>.

The “S” designation is intended to identify courses in which service-learning is implemented in accordance with the below standards.

1. *The course includes one or more academic learning outcomes that will be enhanced by the service.<sup>1</sup>*
2. *The course includes one or more civic learning outcomes that will be enhanced by the service.<sup>2</sup>*
3. *The instructor and one or more community partners<sup>3</sup> will collaboratively design a service project or experience that advances the above mentioned student learning outcomes while meeting one or more needs identified by the community partner/s organization.<sup>4</sup>*
4. *The course includes structured reflection upon the service project/experience by the students in light of intended academic and civic learning outcomes.<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Enhanced academic learning refers to the added value the service experience brings to the students’ learning. Generally there are two ways that the integration of service can enhance learning: 1) through complementing more traditional classroom- and book-based pedagogies (e.g. students improving Spanish speaking abilities by serving in a Latino/a community organization), or 2) through enabling learning possibilities precluded in more traditional pedagogies (e.g. the same students learning about Latino/a culture as a complement to their language learning). The instructor should be purposeful to design the service experience and accompanying coursework in a way that enhances the students’ academic learning in one or both of these ways. The instructor should communicate these provisions to the community partner during the planning stage.

<sup>2</sup> Civic learning involves the personalizing of the learning experience in light of the student’s role as a citizen, scholar, or professional. The civic knowledge, skills, values, or propensities to be advanced through the service-learning should be determined by the instructor, and should be reflected in the student learning outcomes and content of the course. Civic learning can range in its level of intensity from a general focus on responsible citizenship (e.g. democratic preparedness or professional ethics) to an emphasis on change-making (e.g. political or social action).

<sup>3</sup> A service-learning community partner can be 1) any nonprofit or public sector organization, agency, or institution, or 2) a private sector business or establishment that is underserved in the traditional market economy. In cases such as university-operated legal or veterinary clinics, the community partner can also be the client.

<sup>4</sup> The service project or experience should 1) clearly contribute to the community partner organization’s ability to fulfill their mission or charge, and 2) clearly advance one or more academic and civic student learning outcomes from the course. The instructor and the community partner should work together to define an appropriate service project or experience in line with these goals. This entails the instructor sharing the anticipated student learning outcomes with the community partner, and the community partner sharing information about the organization’s mission and needs.

<sup>5</sup> Reflection is the purposeful consideration of the service project or experience by students in light of intended academic and civic learning outcomes. For example, a reflection assignment may include examining some aspect of the service project/experience in light of a theory or framework observed within the discipline. Through ongoing reflection, the service should continually inform the learning and the learning should continually inform the service

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- What are the academic and civic learning outcome/s that will be enhanced by the service project or experience? See Standards #1 and #2 above.
- How will the department ensure that the course establishes and maintains Standard #3 above? Please describe, if applicable, how the department would address a change of instructor or other potential disruption while maintaining the integrity of this standard.
- How will the course utilize structured reflection to prompt students to consider the service project or experience in light of the intended academic and civic learning outcomes?
- Please attach a representative course syllabus (including course description, prerequisites, clear indication that the course is a Service-Learning course, and course objectives that include academic and civic learning outcomes that will be enhanced by the service). If available, please attach one or more samples of student work produced in conjunction with a service-learning project or experience from this course.
- Courses that receive the “S” designation will become eligible to receive support through the campus’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), Experience Learning. Please indicate if the department would like to learn more about support available to this course through the QEP.
- Please attach documentation of approval of proposed course changes at the department and college levels, including signatures of approvers at department and/or college levels.

Please e-mail the completed form, syllabus, and other requested materials to Molly Sullivan at [msulli27@utk.edu](mailto:msulli27@utk.edu) as a Microsoft Word or PDF file.

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so that each adds value to the other. Reflection activities can include guided discussion, structured journals, blog entries, oral presentations, or written papers. Reflection questions should be rooted in course content, and should prompt students to consider their roles and responsibilities as citizens, academics, and professionals in a complex and diverse society.