Service-Learning is a teaching method that links meaningful community service and academic study so that each component strengthens the other. For students, service-learning provides opportunities to engage in community issues, gain new hands-on experiences, broaden perspectives, and become more academically engaged, critical, and reflective. Service-Learning opportunities can help create a sense of civic responsibility in students that lasts beyond the college years.

**Why Take a Service-Learning Course?**
Involvement in a service-learning course allows students to have real-life experience and opportunities that extend beyond textbooks and tests. Students will meet a real community need while developing your own job skills, gaining new experiences, and engaging in academic processes. Service-learning experiences provide numerous benefits to students, but also come with great responsibilities.

**Benefits**

- **apply your unique education and experiences to real-life situations**
- **gain a better understanding of course content and connections**
- **interact with people from diverse cultures and lifestyles**
- **develop communication and interpersonal relationship skills**
- **gain practical knowledge and employment experience**
- **become aware of needs and issues in your local community**
- **gain new perspectives and challenge preconceived notions**
- **provide meaningful service to the local community while gaining academic enrichment**

**Studies have shown that service-learning positively impacts students**:  
✔ Sense of civic responsibility  
✔ Career choice and direction  
✔ Critical thinking and writing skills  
✔ Classroom discussions  
✔ GPA

**Responsibilities:** While service-learning provides many benefits, it also has many responsibilities. Each course is different, so check with your professor for specifics about responsibilities and requirements.

✔ Managing the details of your service: tracking your hours, maintaining your schedule

✔ Contribute to the agency’s mission: fulfill your tasks, be punctual and responsible

✔ Be intellectually involved in your experience: share concerns or ideas and ask questions

✔ Course and classmates: engage fully in assignments, reflect critically, and share your ideas and experiences with others

**At A Glance: What We Know about The Effects of Service-Learning on College Students, Faculty, Institutions and Communities, 1993-2000: Third Edition.**

**More Resources**

Go to the Service-Learning Center’s website to look at Annual Reports, which catalog service-learning courses and projects or search for a service-learning class on the Service-Learning Courses page.

**Look at the Service-Learning Student Guide on our website for more in-depth information about responsibilities and requirements.**
Service-Learning from a Student Perspective

When Choosing a Service-Learning Course:

- **Think about what your goals are from the course:**
  Are you a senior who wants a capstone experience in your discipline? Or are you a sophomore looking to find a discipline that is right for you or explore outside your chosen field? Do you just want to make a difference in your community? What sorts of skills do you wish to contribute or develop?

- **Remember that each service-learning course is unique:**
  There is no one-size-fits-all approach to service-learning activities and coursework. Each service-learning course will have its own design, purpose, and process. For example, the professor might let you choose which community partner you work with or assign you to a partner. Some service-learning projects will require travel or work on a weekly basis, others are more periodic.

- **These are 4 models of service-learning that courses often fall within:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline-Based</th>
<th>Project or Problem Based</th>
<th>Capstone</th>
<th>Community-Based Action Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• students are engaged with an organization for an entire semester</td>
<td>• students act as &quot;consultants&quot; for specific projects</td>
<td>• upper-level students use experience/education to create a project or provide service</td>
<td>• community partners, faculty, &amp; students create a research project to address community need</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Getting the Most Out of Service-Learning Courses:

- Make sure to pick a course type that fits with your needs, goals and expectations
- Engage fully in your service project, coursework and reflection process.
- Remember that not all service-learning projects are successfully completed. Stay positive and remember to focus on what you have both learned and contributed through the experience.
- Think about your service-learning experience in these three phases:

  **What?**  **So What?**  **Now What?**
  “What did I experience…?”  “What does it mean…?”  “What do I do now…?”

University of Idaho’s Service-Learning Courses: In the 2012-2013 school year, the University of Idaho offered 132 service-learning courses that represented over 20 departments. The opportunities for students to engage in service-learning are abundant and diverse!

- Architectural design
- **BIOREGIONAL PLANNING**
- **Dance**
- **American Indian Studies**
- **Pro-Bono Law Clinics**
- **TUTORING**
- **Natural resource management**
- **Engineering**
- **Business**
- **Public relations**