

California State University, Stanislaus
Office of Service Learning
2009/10 Assessment of Student Learning Survey

A primary goal of the Office of Service Learning (OSL) at California State University, Stanislaus is the promotion of student learning through active participation in meaningful service directly related to course content. Since opening in 2001, over 16,000 students have had the opportunity to participate in service learning courses. To further explore the effect service learning (SL) has on each student's learning, the Service Learning Steering Committee (comprised of service learning faculty, college deans, community members, and OSL staff) developed a plan to assess various components of service learning. This plan included an evaluation of student learning and surveys or interviews to gauge the effectiveness of supportive services offered to faculty and community partners. For 2009/10, student learning in service learning courses was evaluated. The Service Learning Steering Committee developed Service Learning Program Goals, which are framed through the lens of student learning. The Committee then developed specific student learning objectives to accompany these important Service Learning Program Goals. Students participating in service learning are expected to achieve the following student learning objectives:

1. Apply discipline-specific and/or interdisciplinary knowledge and critical thinking skills to community issues.
2. Demonstrate critical self-reflection of one's own assumptions and values as applied to community issues.
3. Demonstrate knowledge and sensitivity to issues of culture, diversity, and social justice as applied to community engagement.

For 2009/10, the first service learning student learning objective was evaluated. Faculty were recruited by email and telephone to request a short survey be given to students enrolled in their service learning courses in fall 2009. The survey (Attachment A: Survey on Student Learning) was administered in December 2009 and took students approximately 20 minutes to fill out. 24 courses, with a total of 36 sections, offered a service learning component in fall 2009, and students in seven courses (approximately 30% of all fall 2009 SL courses) participated in the service learning evaluation and completed surveys.

Survey on Student Learning: Likert Scale Ratings

Students were asked a number of questions such as major/course of study, academic standing, and whether they had taken a service learning course in the past. Following these demographic questions, two main questions addressing the first Student Learning Objective (SLO) utilized a Likert scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being "Strongly disagree" and 5 being "Strongly agree". After each Likert scale was a prompt and space for students to briefly explain their choice. A total of 139 surveys were completed at the end of the semester by students in the seven different service learning courses.

The results of the survey are reported in *Table 1: Service Learning Student Likert Scale Responses*. A total of 96.4% of all students who completed surveys rated that they agreed or strongly agreed that by working on a service learning project or assignment in the community or related to a community issue(s), they were able to see the connection between the course and their project (62.6% strongly agree; 33.8% agree). 81.3% of all student respondents rated that they agreed or strongly agreed that their service learning experience in the course made them think about the topics discussed in the course more than a lecture-only course (46% strongly agree; 35.3% agree). 8.6% or 12 respondents did not respond and left this question blank.

Table 1: Service Learning Student Likert Scale Responses

1. By working on a service learning project or assignment in the community or related to a community issue, I am able to see the connection between this course and my project							
	Strongly Agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1	No Response	Total
Number of Student Responses	87	47	3	1	1	0	139
Percentage	62.60%	33.80%	2.20%	0.70%	0.70%	0.00%	100%
2. My service learning experience in this course has made me think about the topics discussed in the course more than a lecture-only course.							
	Strongly Agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1	No Response	Total
Number of Student Responses	64	49	10	1	3	12	139
Percentage	46.00%	35.30%	7.20%	0.70%	2.20%	8.60%	100%

Qualitative Evaluation: Student Written Response Segment of Survey

To assess the responses made in the writing space directly following each Likert scale question, SL Steering Committee Member, Dr. Whitney Donnelly qualitatively evaluated the student text. Please see *Table 2: Service Learning Student Written Survey Response*. Key phrases or concepts were identified and coded. The frequency column indicates how many of a particular type of comment was made, however students could have addressed several of the codes (key phrases or concepts) in their answers. Comments are exemplars, or typical responses attached to the category. Higher/Lower: responses for each category/code were scored as either Higher (3 or 4) or Lower (1 or 2). Using this informational along with the frequency column, gives the reader an idea of how frequently the Higher or Lower score was applied to a response. Please see Attachment B: SL Student Learning Objective 1 Rubric.

Table 2: Service Learning Student Written Survey Response

Code/Category	Frequency Across all surveys	Rubric Score: Higher (4 or 3) or Lower (2 or 1)	Representative Comments: Exemplars
community awareness	7	H	Working on the service learning project/assignment made me more aware of my community and its schools. My participation in this project helped me realize that there are many people out there who need our help and that we might have student who are having a hard time in life.
diversity in communities observed	8	H	This course is meant for showing the students the different types of communities and diversity at school and we were not only able to discuss it in class, but experience it as well. A real eye opener.

			I have also witnessed many types of diversity and how it affects the classroom.
experiencing the environment	13	L	Because I was able to experience what it would be like when I became a teacher and have my own class. This experience gave me insight into what it is like to be a teacher.
impact on personal learning	263	H	It proved that some of the things I was learning in the classroom actually work in the real world. I am able to be involved and learn and have new experiences through observations.
impact on students/clients at sites	24	H	I am able to make connections between teaching students and their success to my own. I see the importance of teaching and strategies needed in order to be a good teacher. My teacher explained different strategies that I was able to use with the children I worked with and I saw that they were indeed effective strategies.
observing course content in action	57	L	I was able to see real like examples of what we were learning in the course. I was able to see the topics we talked about in class in action in real life situations.
practice or apply concepts	75	H	I was able to put what I learned in class in action in the class I observed. How to apply the knowledge I have learned into real work experiences such as assessments, reading methods and study skills
preparation for future work	36	L	It helps me gain a better understanding of what is involved in a classroom. It allows me to gain ideas for when I'm a teacher. It got me comfortable with the idea of a career in teaching
reflect or think about course content	19	H	Everything studied in this class will affect me one way or another as a future teacher. It has helped me to think about new ideas, situations and difficulties I will face in the future. I feel being able to apply what is talked about in class really makes me think about the material more than I would without student interaction in the classroom
reflect on work at site	3	H	I was then able to reflect on my presentation to analyze what changes I would make in the future. There were things I would have done differently. It would have been cool to try again, learn from mistakes and grow.

working with or helping students	68	L	Working with students has been a great learning experience and has helped me to connect with the profession. It is the only class that allows us to constantly work with children in a school setting.
----------------------------------	----	---	---

Attachment A: Survey on Student Learning

Survey on Student Learning

Office of Service Learning, California State University, Stanislaus

The Office of Service Learning is conducting a brief evaluation of student learning in service learning courses during fall 2009. Please answer the following questions below. All personal student information (such as your name) will be kept confidential and results will be reported in the aggregate.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Please circle your academic standing: **Freshman** **Sophomore** **Junior** **Senior**

Major/Course of study: _____

Service Learning Course Instructor: _____

Service Learning Project/Assignment: _____

Have you previously taken a service learning course? **Yes** **No**

If you answered yes, please list these SL courses _____

Please answer the following question by circling the number that you believe best represents your feeling about the service learning project in this course.

- 1. By working on a service learning project or assignment in the community or related to a community issue, I am able to see the connection between this course and my project.**

5 4 3 2 1
Strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

Please write a brief paragraph explaining your response.

2. My service learning experience in this course has made me think about the topics discussed in the course more than a lecture-only course.

5 4 3 2 1
Very strongly agree Agree Neutral Disagree Very strongly disagree

Please write a brief paragraph explaining your response.

Service Learning (SL) Student Learning Objective 1

Rubric

Student Learning Objective 1

Apply discipline-specific and/or interdisciplinary knowledge and critical thinking skills to community issues.

Student Learning Objective 1	4 HIGH	3	2	1 LOW
Discipline-specific and/or interdisciplinary knowledge	Makes a firm connection between the service learning project/assignment and course and course material. Can explain why this connection is important.	Analyzes an acknowledged connection between service learning project/assignment and course and course material.	Begins to make a connection between the service learning project/assignment and course material.	Does not clearly see the connection between the service learning project/assignment and the course material.
Critical thinking skills	Student uses broad in-depth analysis of course service learning project and curriculum to make decisions and clearly articulate their opinions. The student clearly states how they analyzed the material and how it helped shape or define their opinions.	Students conduct a basic analysis of course service learning project and the course curriculum to form opinions, but it may be unclear to the reader. The student states how they analyzed the material but may not state how it shaped or defined their opinions.	Student states opinions, but does not offer an analysis of how these opinions are related to course and service learning project.	Opinions are not clearly stated, and no analysis of course material and service learning project is offered. Student is very unclear as to why and how service learning project relates to them.