

INTEGRATING SERVICE-LEARNING INTO LEADERSHIP EDUCATION

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Service-learning. Distance Education. Leadership Education. These are three of the most highly researched and fastest growing trends in higher education today. At Fort Hays State University in Hays, KS these three trends are combined to create an enriched academic experience.

Background

Service-learning is a targeted response to community needs and leadership development issues that lies at the intersection of theory, practice, self, and community. Service-learning should not be misconstrued as just doing a project to help others. It is much more than that in that the learning is reciprocated during the service. This is what makes service-learning such a unique learning experience. What is learned is different for each student, but can be enriched through the intense reflection process. It differs from the community service done in the high-school level or as part of a college student organization. Traditional volunteerism is differentiated from service-learning by the reciprocal learned amount that occurs between those being served and those serving.

Service-Learning

Combined, service-learning, distance education, and leadership studies create a rich learning experience for students both on and off our campus. Throughout the service experience students not only address community needs, but deepen the leadership concepts taught throughout their previous leadership coursework. Piaget (1968) discovered that learning requires integration of concepts and experiences. An individual modifies concepts based on experiences and he/she fits experiences into existing concepts.

Service-learning is a type of experiential education in which the learner works directly on a community issue and follows up with guided reflection on the experience. It is a method of teaching and learning that integrates community service activities into academic curricula and enlarges the learning arena of students from the classroom to the community.

Effective service-learning consists of four elements:

- Sufficient **preparation**, which includes competencies to be achieved and planning projects so they contribute to learning at the same time work gets done;
- the **experience** of encountering a real life problem;
- **reflection**, in which the participant attempts to analyze and draw lessons from the experience;
- **assessment** of the extent to which the desired competencies have been achieved.

Service-learning transforms students from passive learners of information into active learners and community members whose responsible actions renew the landscape of their communities. Service-learning not only changes the way students learn, but it changes society's view of education and service. In this sense, service-learning is both a philosophy of education and a service to the community. (K-State Community Service Program, 2003)

Distance Education

The delivery model of distance education is in high demand not only at Fort Hays State University, but across the country. Easily adapting to students' needs, distance learning creates an opportunity for students to further their education from anywhere in the world. Distance education, due to its time and geographic flexibility, has appealed to working adult learners who work full-time and seek continuous education as part-time students. In 2000-01, 52 percent of institutions with undergraduate programs offered credit-bearing distance education courses at the undergraduate level. (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003) With the demand for distance education on the rise, we as leadership educators need to seize this opportunity to expand our programs across the nation.

Leadership Education

Higher education has long asserted that it prepares young people for the responsibilities of leadership, but until recently, only a few schools have addressed the characteristics of leadership and how leaders might be educated. Today, more and more institutions of higher learning are recognizing the need and importance of providing students with opportunities to study and practice leadership. Over the last several decades, an increasing number of colleges and universities have begun to offer programs and courses in leadership studies and organizational leadership. Latest reports indicate that between 600 and 700 campuses are attempting to address leadership issues through classroom instruction. 21st century organizations and communities need students that are prepared for positions of leadership.

Leadership Education at Fort Hays State University

The Department of Leadership Studies at Fort Hays State University (FHSU) integrates three major components in leadership education: what (creating change), how (collaborating with others), and why (civic leadership). The "what" of leadership consists of creating change. The very concept of change is what makes leadership different from all other forms of human interaction. Leaders and followers are encouraged to serve as change agents in their organizations and communities to create positive social change. The change is initiated through collaboration or the "how" of

leadership. Bringing diverse groups of people together to create solutions to move from “what is” to “what ought to be” is the goal of collaboration. Civic leadership, the “why” of leadership, addresses the good of all parties affected by the change, most commonly referred to as the common good.

The “why” or Civic Leadership component had been included in the on-campus leadership education curriculum at Fort Hays State University since 1996. In 2000 the entire program was expanded to distance education via the FHSU Virtual College. However, like many college courses with a service component, the missing service-learning aspect was the reflection element. Students and faculty were heavily involved in the preparation, as well as the service experience itself, but yet never came back together in reflection activities for the true learning to take place. Two years ago reflection was added to the course to more closely mirror a true service-learning course. Assessment is the final component of service-learning. Currently team members assess each other for a large percentage of their grade. However, a tool for community organizations to assess team members is being developed this semester.

On-campus delivery

In our traditional on-campus sections of this class, students self-select both teams and projects. As a result of the service projects from this class over the years, community organizations request teams of students to work with them on a semester basis. These community contacts present their project ideas in the first week of class. Students then form their teams around project areas of interest to them. Within the first month of class students research the issue, identify potential action steps, and write a detailed strategic plan. This plan then serves as the outline for their semester activities as they work to make positive community change.

Throughout the semester students are required to present the progress on their projects both in class and in the community. Students are also required to evaluate their team members’ contributions to the success of the project. Continuous reflection is done throughout the semester both oral and written. Their classmates are then asked to respond with feedback that makes them think about who is benefiting from the project, what they are learning throughout the process, how they will use the information they are learning in their future lives, and what they are learning about being a citizen and participating in lifetime service. Some weeks this is done in teams, while other weeks the entire class reflects together. The final assignment is a written personal reflection paper read only by the student and the instructor.

Distance delivery

There are many similarities in the on and off campus sections of this course. However, the differences are notable. The major difference is that students in the distance course are located all around the world. These students are required to choose their community change project in their own locations and hopefully collaborate with key stakeholders interested in the change. An exception to this is Navy sailors on board ships who must get very creative in choosing their projects. For example, one sailor redesigned his hometown’s webpage while out to sea.

Another difference is in the reflection process. Virtual students have the opportunity to post their progress on Blackboard – the distance education software used at the university. While the goals for this reflection process are similar both on and off campus, the method used to facilitate the reflection is written versus the combination of oral and written. (See Appendix A)

Since the addition of the distance delivery of this course, positive community change has taken place globally. Now each semester rather than having six to eight projects undertaken in Hays, Kansas, this class produces sixteen to eighteen projects around the world.

Results

We are confident that these projects are truly creating positive community change throughout the world. It is evident that our students have made real change through the projects they have implemented. We are also confident that our students (at least in the short-term) are learning valuable lessons about leadership, community change, and service. They are learning to be persistent, collaborative, and serve as change agents. What is unknown is the more important long-term impact of leadership service-learning. Over the next ten years, research will need to be conducted to track the success of students involved in service-learning coursework. However, if early indications are correct, this method of instruction shows tremendous possibilities.

References

K-State Community Service Program. (2003). Service-learning guidelines. Kansas State University: Manhattan, KS.

Piaget, J. (1968). Structuralism. New York: Harper Torchbooks

Waits, T. & Lewis, L. (2003). Distance education at degree-granting postsecondary institutions: 2000-2001. National Center for Education Statistics.

Appendix A

**Leadership Studies: Fort Hays State
University
LDRS 310
Field Work in Leadership Studies
SYLLABUS**

Off-Campus Delivery

Instructor:

Curt Brungardt

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Fort Hays State University

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this interdisciplinary course is to help move the student from the study of leadership to the actual participation in a leadership project. Students will be asked to serve as citizen leaders in a local community project of their choice in conjunction with an existing organization. Course activities include: recognizing a community problem, working with other concerned citizens to develop a plan of action, and implementing that plan.

This is a service-learning course which is a culmination to the Leadership Studies program core courses. Service-learning is a targeted response to community needs and leadership development issues that lies at the intersection of theory, practice, self, and community. Service-learning should not be misconstrued as just doing a project to help others. It is much more than that in that the learning is reciprocated during the service. This is what makes service-learning such a unique learning experience. What is learned is different for each student, but can be enriched through the intense reflection process. It differs from the community service done in the high-school level or as part of a college student organization. Traditional volunteerism is differentiated from service-learning by the reciprocal learned amount that occurs between those being served and those serving.

Distinguishing Characteristics of Some Common Student Community-Based Experiences

	Community Service	Enhanced Academic Learning	Purposeful Civic Learning
Volunteering or Community Service	Yes	No	No
Co-Curricular Service-Learning	Yes	No	Yes
Academic Service-Learning	Yes	Yes	Yes
Internship	Sometimes	Yes	No

Howard, 2001

COURSE OBJECTIVES (continued)

- ◆ to engage in a collaborative project involving the implementation and practice of civic leadership in the Hays area, putting into practice the principles of collaborative leadership covered in LDRS 302
- ◆ to increase understanding of leadership theories and concepts
- ◆ to increase students' abilities to work in teams
- ◆ to explore personal values with respect to leadership and service
- ◆ to be able to articulate an understanding of community service and service-learning
- ◆ to utilize community service as a introduction to service, civic responsibility, and leadership
- ◆ to provide opportunities and methods for reflection
- ◆ to discuss critical issues of diversity, social justice, community, and civic responsibility with leadership and service
- ◆ to develop a personal philosophy of service and leadership through critical analysis of social issues, reflection, and practice
- ◆ to be encouraged to be life-long learners and advocates for social change

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks may be ordered and obtained by contacting: MBS Direct, a partner of Fort Hays State University by phone at 1-800-325-3252 or by email at <http://direct.mbsbooks.com/fhsuvc.htm>

Potts, Joseph D. (2001). *The Ethical Difference*. Longmont, CO: Rocky Mountain Press.

CD-ROM: *Field Work in Leadership Studies* (includes videos and project assignments).

COURSE ADMINISTRATION AND REQUIREMENTS

The format of this course is designed for the off-campus student. Students are able to complete all assignments without ever having to visit the Fort Hays State University campus. Activities include reading selected text, viewing videos from the CD-ROM, completing written assignments, and communicating with your instructor and classmates through Blackboard.

REQUIREMENTS:

<u>Community Project</u>	<u>Unit</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Number of Pages</u>
Phase A (Issue Identification)	Unit 4	40 pts.	2 p.
Phase B (Action Plan/Objectives)	Unit 5	100 pts.	5-6 p.
Phase C (Progress Report 1)	Unit 6	25 pts.	2 p.
Phase D (Progress Report 2)	Unit 7	25 pts.	2 p.
Phase E (Progress Report 3)	Unit 8	25 pts.	2 p.
Phase F (Final Project Paper)	Unit 10	100 pts.	8-10 p.
Personal Reflection Paper		50 pts.	2 p.

Phase Information at the end of syllabus

Individual Project:

Book Review (post on Blackboard)	100 pts.
Participation Points	<u>100 pts.</u>
TOTAL =	515 pts.

Community Leadership Project:

The major focus of this course includes the participation in a community project. You are asked to develop several papers that explain your work on a local community issue of your choice. This includes: issue identification, action plans, progress reports including reflection components, and a final project paper. **All your assignments should be posted on Blackboard.**

Book Review: April 7

Students are required to read the textbook and write a 3-4 page book review elaborating on the basic components of *The Ethical Difference* and providing a personal assessment. **Post your review on Blackboard by April 7.**

Grading:

100 – 92%	91 – 83%	82 – 70%	69 – 60%
A	B	C	D

Participation Points:

You will be given points on your participation (comments on Blackboard) throughout the semester. You are encouraged to make suggestions on other students' projects and discuss articles, questions, and topics I will put on the discussion board, as well as my feedback to your reflection comments. Please respond to these postings and interact with one another with your thoughts, ideas, and opinions. **BE SURE TO CHECK THE BOARD ON A REGULAR BASIS!** 100 points of your total points are based off your depth of thorough responses to the discussion board questions.

Reflection:

Reflection activities are intended to link your service experience to your learning of leadership. While many people are accustomed to volunteering in their communities, few have asked themselves “why” issues exist or reflect about the causes and solutions to these social issues. By engaging in these reflective exercises with your classmates through the Discussion Board, you will think deeper about your service as well as your classmates. Throughout this reflection process you should gain a deeper understanding of the service experience, how the service addresses community needs, and how all of this deepens the learning of the concepts from the discipline of leadership studies.

You will include a reflection component in each of your three progress reports. These should be posted on the Discussion Board so that other students may respond.

You will also be responsible for your own Personal Reflection Paper at the end of the semester. Post this paper on Blackboard.

Late Assignments:

For each assignment emailed late to the instructor, a 25 percent penalty will be assessed each day.

Personal Reflection Guide

Reflection is an opportunity through which one can learn from experience. Reflection can take numerous forms and touch on an endless variety of issues. It furthers learning and inspires thought and action. This is your chance to be a great storyteller as you relate your service experience to leadership.

Please include reflections that make you think about who is benefiting from your project, what you are learning throughout the process, how you will use the information you are learning in your future life and what you are learning about being a citizen and participating in lifetime service.

Other potential questions this paper can answer:

- 1) Describe the environment at the site where your team is working.
- 2) What was the most difficult part of your work in terms of skills and knowledge?
In terms of emotional demands?
- 3) What do you feel is your team's main contribution?
- 4) What style of leadership does your organization's supervisor utilize when working with other people?
- 5) How would the people at your organization describe you?
- 6) What insights have you gained about working with people?
- 7) Were you able to use leadership skills learned in prior leadership classes?
Explain.

My hope is that writing this reflection paper will cause you to stop and think about the process and not rely so much on the one team member who typically writes the teams reports. Have fun!!

Participation/Collaboration Survey

Peer Evaluation

Student being evaluated: _____

Scoring: 1= Low (lacking effective skills or abilities)
 2= Average (effective skills or abilities)
 3= High (highly effective skills or abilities)

PARTICIPATION LEVEL:

1. Students regularly attends group meetings
and activities.....1 2 3 4 5
2. Student is an active contributor in group meetings
and activities.....1 2 3 4 5
3. Student completes tasks assigned by the group.....1 2 3 4 5
4. Student does appropriate share of the group work.....1 2 3 4 5

Rank this student's overall PARTICIPATION LEVEL.....1 2 3 4 5

COLLABORATION LEVEL:

1. Student exhibits effective communication and listening skills....1 2 3 4 5
2. Student is open to ideas from others.....1 2 3 4 5
3. Student compromises with others in decision making.....1 2 3 4 5
4. Student treats other group members with dignity
and respect.....1 2 3 4 5

Rank this student's overall COLLABORATION LEVEL.....1 2 3 4 5

Additional Comments:

COURSE SCHEDULE AND OTHER DETAILS

Due Date

- 1/14 – 1/20** **Unit One**-Video 1: Course Introduction Video
- 1/21** **Unit Two**-Audio 1: Reviewing LDRS 300 and 302 Leadership Courses
- 1/22** **Unit Three**-Audio2: Civic Leadership/Social Change and view
Community Project Outline and Assignment
- 1/28** **Unit Four**-Complete Implementation **Phase A** Assignment of the
Community Project on the CD-ROM
**** You must have the instructor's approval of your community
project prior to moving to Phase B.**
- 2/20** **Unit Five**-Complete Implementation **Phase B** Assignment of the
Community Project on the CD-ROM
****Once the instructor has approved your plan, you may continue
working on your community project.**
*****Please e-mail me the name and phone number of the contact
person you will be working most closely with on this project.**
- 3/03** **Unit Six**-Complete Implementation **Phase C** Assignment of the
Community Project on the CD-ROM. Include reflection comments in
your paper (see syllabus).
- 3/17** **Unit Seven**-Complete Implementation **Phase D** Assignment of the
Community Project on the CD-ROM. Include reflection comments in
your paper (see syllabus).
- 4/07** **Book Review**
- 4/07** **Unit Eight**-Complete Implementation **Phase E** Assignment of the
Community Project on the CD-ROM. Include reflection comments in
your paper (see syllabus).
- 4/21** **Unit Nine**-Audio 3: Final Community Project Overview
- 5/03** **Unit Ten**-Complete Implementation **Phase F** Assignment of the
Community Project on the CD-ROM
- 5/10** **Personal Reflection Paper**

UNIT FOUR

Phase A – Issue Identification

In this phase, you are asked to research and select a local community issue or problem that needs to be addressed. Keep in mind that you need to be realistic due to the fact that this project needs to be completed within the semester. Also, remember that the community issue or problem should address the common good (what benefits your local community).

Please submit a 2 page typed double-spaced paper that describes in some detail the community problem or issue that you will address throughout the semester. If you have any questions at this point, email the instructor at this time.

Your paper should include the following:

- a description of the problem (illustrate the severity and the consequences that may occur if the issue is not addressed)
- what are some of the possible solutions to the issue or problem
- what is your vision or desired solution to the problem
- what local community groups are currently working on the problem
- to whom (what community entity) will you be accountable to during your project

****Using the above questions or criterion – post your paper on Blackboard by the stated due date.**

UNIT FIVE

Phase B – Action Plan/Desired Objectives

In this phase, you are asked to provide a comprehensive plan of action regarding what you hope to accomplish in addressing your community issue or problem. This includes what you hope to accomplish in the next two months and all the steps necessary to complete your task.

Please submit a 5 – 6 page typed double-spaced paper that describes in some detail the plan of action for addressing your community problem or issue. If you have any questions at this point, email the instructor at this time.

Your plan of action should include:

- ◆ a summary of the problem or issue to be addressed
- ◆ a description of your desired outcome at the end of the project
- ◆ the action steps that you and the community group will undergo in order to accomplish your goals. These action steps should include *what needs to be done; how it needs to be done; when it needs to be done; who needs to do it; and the resources needed to accomplish the task.*
- ◆ place your action steps in a timeline
- ◆ what role will you personally play in this project?

****Using the above questions or criterion – post your paper on Blackboard by the stated due date.**

UNIT SIX

Phase C – Progress Report #1

Summarize what you have accomplished to date and how you may have adjusted your implementation plan to overcome obstacles. This might include:

- ◆ summary of accomplishment
- ◆ summary of problems faced
- ◆ revisions to objectives and/or new objectives
- ◆ revisions to action steps and/or new action steps
- ◆ how the problem has changed and why
- ◆ how your vision of the original problem has changed
- ◆ how your priorities have changed

Discuss the “process” your community group is utilizing. How did your group deal with decisions that had to be made?

- ◆ who has done what so far
- ◆ consensus, majority rules, etc.
- ◆ any conflicts - what were the conflicts and how did you resolve them
- ◆ discuss frustrations/stress
- ◆ discuss what has happened so far, what needs to happen next, and who will do it

Include reflection comments using guide in syllabus.

****Using the above questions or criterion – post your paper on Blackboard by the stated due date.**

UNIT SEVEN

Phase D – Progress Report #2

Summarize what you have accomplished to date, and how you may have adjusted your implementation plan to overcome obstacles. This might include:

- ◆ summary of accomplishment
- ◆ summary of problems
- ◆ revisions to objectives and/or new objectives
- ◆ revisions to action steps and/or new action steps
- ◆ how the problem has changed and why
- ◆ how your vision of the original problem has changed
- ◆ how your priorities have changed

Discuss the “process” your community group is utilizing. How did your group deal with decisions that had to be made?

- ◆ who has done what so far
- ◆ consensus, majority rules, etc.
- ◆ any conflicts - what were the conflicts and how did you resolve them
- ◆ discuss frustrations/stress
- ◆ discuss what has happened so far, what needs to happen next, and who will do it

Include reflection comments using guide in syllabus.

****Using the above questions or criterion – post your paper on Blackboard by the stated due date.**

UNIT EIGHT

Phase E – Progress Report #3

Summarize what you have accomplished to date, and how you may have adjusted your implementation plan to overcome obstacles. This might include:

- ◆ summary of accomplishment
- ◆ summary of problems
- ◆ revisions to objectives and/or new objectives
- ◆ revisions to action steps and/or new action steps
- ◆ how the problem has changed and why
- ◆ how your vision of the original problem has changed
- ◆ how your priorities have changed

Discuss the “process” your community group is utilizing. How did your group deal with decisions that had to be made?

- ◆ who has done what so far
- ◆ consensus, majority rules, etc.
- ◆ any conflicts - what were the conflicts and how did you resolve them
- ◆ discuss frustrations/stress
- ◆ discuss what has happened so far, what needs to happen next, and who will do it

Include reflection comments using guide in syllabus.

****Using the above questions or criterion – post your paper on Blackboard by the stated due date.**

UNIT NINE

Audio 3: Final Community Project Overview

In this final audio, the instructor will first review the process of community leadership and action, and then secondly, discuss the Final Community Project Report.

Final Project Outline

- ◆ Project evaluation
- ◆ Obstacles
- ◆ The End Project
- ◆ Quality and Effectiveness
- ◆ Hindsight is 20/20
- ◆ Attachments

UNIT TEN

Phase F – Final Community Project Report

Your final paper should answer all of the following questions to some extent. It should be typed double-spaced and long enough to cover all of the indicated criterion. BE SURE TO PROOFREAD CAREFULLY FOR SPELLING AND GRAMMAR MISTAKES!

Part I: Project Evolution

Describe your project as you initially planned it, and then explain how it changed over time. Here you can talk about your initial vision statement, goals, and objectives. Then carefully describe these and your project in their final form.

Part II: Obstacles

Describe the various obstacles and difficulties you encountered and how you dealt with them.

Part III: The End Product

Describe what you ultimately produced. What was your end project? Did you achieve your goals and objectives? How was your end product used (what has been done with it so far, either by you or by others)? How will it be used in the future (by others)? How confident are you that it will be used in this way?

Part IV: Quality and Effectiveness

Describe the quality of your end product? Is it of high quality? Why or why not? How do you know? Is it/Was it/Will it be effective in achieving the goals you set? Why or why not? How do you know? How could the quality and/or effectiveness of your product have been better?

Part V: Hindsight is 20/20

If you were starting this same project again now, knowing what you know now, what would you have done differently?

Part VI: Mail or electronically attach copies of what you produced

Pamphlets, workshop outlines, grant proposals, budgets, business plans, bids, handouts, maps, surveys, survey results and analyses, presentations, overheads, software files on disk, etc. (whatever you created as part of your project). Mail materials to instructor.

****Using the above questions or criterion – post your paper on Blackboard by the stated due date.**