SERVICE LEARNING CASE STUDY

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Outline

1. Teaching and Learning Context Matters
2. What is Service Learning?
3. Who Participates in Service Learning?
4. Focus on Reflection
5. Lessons Learned
1. Context Matters in Teaching and Learning
• 20YS developed in the spirit of respectful collaboration with the Musqueam First Nation.

• UBC acknowledges that its Vancouver campus is located on unceded, traditional Musqueam territory.

niʔ ct xíx̣ałəmət tə ńə təməxʷ. We are caring for this land.
1. The University’s curriculum is transformed, with every undergraduate student able to pursue a pathway in sustainability. UBC is internationally renowned for its many world-class graduate programs, which address the full range of ecological, social and economic dimensions of sustainability.
Number of UBC APSC Students in Service Learning Courses

- 2006: 50
- 2007: 80
- 2008: 120
- 2009: 180
- 2010: 240
- 2011: 400
- 2012: 450
- 2013: 600
- 2014: 900
- 2015: 950
- 2016: 1000
2. What is Service Learning?
The elements of service learning (from the university perspective):

- **S**ervice-work is identified by, and achieved with, a community organization.
- **A**cademic learning goals and objectives are achieved via the service-work.
- **R**eflect on the connections between their service-work experiences and their academic learning goals.
- **F**eedback on reflections.
**EXAMPLE**

**Fish Smoke House**

**Design & Build**

- **Service work:** A team of 10 civil engineering students worked with the Vancouver Native Health Society to design and build a fish smoke house.

- **Academic learning goals and objectives:** e.g.:
  By the end of this course, you will be able to:
  - Integrate the concerns of stakeholders and the larger society into infrastructure design.
  - Plan the construction of a small structure.
  - Work effectively as a team member and as a leader.
• **Reflect:** e.g.: What surprised you about this work?
  - [As a Canadian of Chinese decent who had not previously met a First Nations Elder] “at first I found it hard to make sense of what our supervisor wanted us to do. But, with the help of team-mates, I learned to understand his way of communicating.”
  - “I felt proud to help my team learn about First Nations culture.”

• **Feedback:** e.g.:
  - “It’s really important in professional practice to be sensitive to different ways of thinking and different uses of language.”
  - “How do you think helping your team learn makes you a better engineer?”
**EXAMPLE**

**Daycare Playtable Design & Build**

**Project:** Therapeutic Playtable

**Community Development:**
- Strengthen community assets by providing better child care

**Organization Development:**
- Increased quality of the daycare services
- Increased ability to secure grants
Project: Design and Build of a Prototype Water-Use Game at the Local Science Park

Institutional Support when something goes wrong:

• UBC Staff provided feedback to 10 students when a teaching assistant became unavailable (about 30 min per student)
3. Who Participates in Service Learning?
Most Important Relationship!
4. Focus on Student Reflection
Community-Based Experiential Learning (CBEL) Assignment

THIS ASSIGNMENT IMPROVES:

• Communicating
• Connecting sustainability context to project decisions
• Reflecting, argumentation, systems thinking

ASSIGNMENT DELIVERABLES ARE:

• Report (team or individual)
• Journal Entries (personal reflections)
What Is Reflection?

Reflection is an “active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and further conclusions to which it leads” (Dewey 1933 pg. 118).

Schön identifies two types of reflection:
- reflection on action, which is undertaken retrospectively, and
- reflection in action, which is essentially ‘thinking on your feet’.

*Repeatedly carrying out the process of ‘reflecting on action’ can help practitioners build upon their previous understanding.*

What Is Reflection?

Reflection is most effective when following these four guidelines.

1. **Continuous**
   Reflection is an ongoing activity that happens before, during and after experiences.

2. **Connected**
   Reflection directly connects academic learning with experience in the community.

3. **Contextualized**
   Reflection activities and topics are appropriate and meaningful to the experience.

4. **Challenging**
   Reflection challenges assumptions, prompting critical thinking about the experience.
Moving From “What” To “So What”

**What?**
- Can be described as the descriptive phase
- Ask “what” happened during the day – facts, occurrences, etc.

**So What?**
- Can be described as the interpretation phase
- Discussion moved to what kind of impact did the service have? What kind of difference has the experience made to individuals? What are the consequences and meaning?

**Now What?**
- Can be described as the action phase
- An action plan is formed
- What will participants do differently? how can this be applied to other situations

**Asking meaningful questions:**
- **Knowledge:** What were your first impressions?
- **Comprehension:** How was this similar or different from what you expected?
- **Application:** How did your experience change your perspective?
- **Analysis:** What parts of the experience have been most challenging to you?
- **Synthesis:** What have you personally learned about yourself from the CBEL project?
- **Evaluation:** How did the experience impact your learning of the theory?
Reflection

Service Learning Assignment

Personal Reflection & Written Feedback

Group Reflection & Verbal Feedback

Service Learning

Group Reflection & Verbal Feedback

Personal Reflection & Written Feedback

Service Learning Report
Assessing Reflections with Rubrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Undeveloped</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Fully Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connections with Prior Understanding</td>
<td>Submission is limited to a description of events. No mention of underlying assumptions, habits, or values.</td>
<td>Makes connections between experiences and a personal understanding (including values, beliefs, underlying assumptions)</td>
<td>Questioning one’s own understanding in light of experiences and the behaviour of others, and in light of the academic/course work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Insights</td>
<td>Written work is entirely backward-looking.</td>
<td>General connections made experiences and future actions.</td>
<td>Clear connections made between course work, experiences and concrete plans for future actions.</td>
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5. Lessons Learned
Lessons Learned

Service Learning:
• supports asset development within marginalized (and other) communities
• enhances student attitudes relating to self-reliance, professionalism and leadership, and
• can influence student beliefs about people living in the margins of society
Lessons Learned

• Partner with the community organization as a co-educator – *this is critical for success!*
• COMMUNITY and campus should be emphasized
• Meaningful interactions between *community members and students* are at the core of CEL
What do community partners think?

• Students are not a burden
• Students are greatly valued for their humanity, enthusiasm and competence
• Welcome different students over several years
• Appreciate the ability to work on a variety of projects, depending on the organization’s needs
What do students say they learn?

- Interdependence between health, social, infrastructure and/or environmental issues for real people in the real world
- Reality check – “change the world” vs. what is possible at this time in this setting
- Personal interaction and communication
- Personal growth and life skills
- Self as an infrastructure professional
- Applications of Civil Engineering Design and project management processes and techniques
Structural Alignment

Course Learning Objectives

Service Learning Activities

Course Assessments
With consideration to constructive alignment of your students’ learning, develop **TWO** appropriate learning outcomes for your reflection assignment.

**EXAMPLE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Reflection Assignment Learning Objective (know., skills, attitudes)</th>
<th>Reflection Assessment Evaluation Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demonstrate prof. attitudes &amp; skills:</strong></td>
<td>Describe and critique your comfort level in terms of your role as a civil engineering student attending a stakeholder engagement event</td>
<td>Connects insights relating to personal experiences and thoughts, and personal knowledge of stakeholder engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply stakeholder analysis techniques</td>
<td>Reflect on your learning experiences and how they relate (or not) to your professional development</td>
<td>Demonstrates sincere engagement in critical self-reflection</td>
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<td>Practice personal reflection</td>
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