**Frequently Asked Service-Learning Questions**

**Q:** How do I do service-learning with an enrollment of 125?

**A:** Service-learning has been implemented in courses ranging from 10 to 250 students. Granted, smaller enrollment courses are more manageable when coordinating service-learning, but it can be done with larger enrollment courses if the appropriate infrastructure through TA support and close contact with the CCLC staff are in place. A key element to having service-learning work well in large courses is the ability to run small facilitated discussion sections so students have adequate reflection opportunities. Creative scheduling and TA support helps make discussions possible.

**Q:** Is service-learning appropriate for students in introductory and lower-level courses?

**A:** Service-learning has been successfully utilized by educators in K-12 schools for years, as well as in college level courses. The key to making service-learning successful is carefully selecting community site placements where students are given appropriate levels of responsibility for their skill level.

**Q:** Do students have time to do service-learning when so many of them work and go to school?

**A:** Most students will have time to fit service-learning into their schedules, in fact many students who said they didn’t think they had time to volunteer before doing service-learning have told us they are going to continue their work in the community when the course ends. Due to the variety of community placements, there are opportunities and needs for students twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. However, not all students may be able to accommodate a service-learning course. For this reason, we suggest making service-learning optional or if you want all your students to do service-learning, decide whether you will allow one or two students to make special arrangements if they can not do service-learning. If you are not going to allow special arrangements, state this very clearly the first week of the course and in your syllabus so these students can withdraw from the course.

**Q:** What if something happens to the students or their actions result in damages to someone else?

**A:** All service-learning students should be fully informed about their placement and knowingly consent to undertaking any risks associated with that placement by reading, signing, and turning in the completed Student Participant Agreement form. We limit our institutional liability by utilizing community placements which have been visited and screened by members of the service-learning staff/faculty. In most cases the organization which provides the service-learning experience will be responsible for the acts of the students working with them and will assume responsibility for the student. The University of Minnesota carries liability coverage for all academic credit-bearing activities, including service-learning. Community placements working with students from your class should have a signed copy of the Community Partner Agreement Letter on file with a copy of their Certificate of Insurance in CCLC.

**Q:** What are common student challenges with service-learning?

**A:** Students at the U of MN and at other institutions across the country often are concerned about:
- Not enough interaction between staff and students in the community;
- Not enough interaction between students and the community population;
- Not enough work to do once the students arrive at their community site;
- Dull and uninteresting work and feeling ignored or overlooked to do certain duties;
- Being unclear about their work duties and their relevance to overall organization mission;
- Frustration with failure to accomplish desired goals;
- Lack of training for specific duties;
- Feeling like they are treated differently than paid staff; feeling like outsiders; and
- Lack of staff support to answer questions or provide guidance for work.