



# Academic Service-Learning Guide (UG)

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## ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING AT APU: OVERVIEW

The Center for Academic Service-Learning is an academic unit connecting APU's Four Cornerstones through quality service-learning experiences across the campus and in the wider community. Service-learning builds community by developing positive, reciprocal relationships between Azusa Pacific University and the local, national, and international private and public sectors in order to enhance scholarship of faculty, students, and community partners through service activities, which integrate faith in Christ with service and learning.

APU Academic Service-Learning Definition: Academic Service-Learning is a teaching and learning method that promotes student learning through active participation in meaningful and planned service experiences in the community that are directly related to the course content, with a focus on (a) connecting theory to practice, (b) critical reflective thinking, (c) personal and civic responsibility, (d) faith integration, and (e) relationship to students' planned vocation. The three distinctives that characterize service-learning at APU are that it is:

1. *Academic: intentional and clear connection to the course learning outcomes and purposeful critical reflection throughout.*
2. *Reciprocal: active partnerships between faculty, community partners, and students as mutual beneficiaries and co-educators.*
3. *Making a Difference: outcomes of the project are evidenced through impact on community as well as student learning, civic understanding, future goals, and faith development and application.*

### Academic Service-Learning Student Outcomes:

#### *Connecting theory to practice*

- Demonstrate competence in academic content and theory through practical application
- Gain increased understanding of how academic content relates to "the real world"

#### *Critical reflective thinking*

- Articulate connections between course content and service-learning experiences
- Identify how service-learning effected sense of personal efficacy, personal identity, spiritual development, understanding of diversity, and moral development

#### *Personal and civic responsibility*

- Develop personal desire to contribute to local, national, and/or global community
- Evaluate how cultural competence and understanding of diversity are developed through informed and reciprocal interactions with others
- Strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility

#### *Faith integration*

- Explain the relevance of Christian faith through the application of learning
- Articulate an integrated understanding of faith and learning in action

#### *Relationship to planned vocation*

- Prepare for future employment by gaining practical experience and networking opportunities
- Demonstrate skills that employers seek (i.e. communication skills, leadership, problem-solving, etc.)

## BENEFITS OF ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING

### Individual Student

- Application of learning and career development through practical experience and networking
- Holistic development and growth
- Opportunities for stronger connections with faculty and the university
- Course attribute indicated on school records/transcripts and can be valuable in further educational and vocational pursuits
- Opportunity to earn [APU university service credits](#)

### Faculty

- Increased student engagement with course material and application of learning
- Additional research, publication, and grant opportunities
- Networking with professionals in the field as well as engaged faculty in other disciplines and institutions
- Practical opportunities for faith integration and evidence for APU faith integration report paper

### Community

- Opportunity to participate in the educational and vocational development of students
- Valuable human resources and programs to achieve goals
- Enriched community-university relations
- New energy, perspective, insight, and resources gained

### University

- Alignment with APU mission and values (Four Cornerstones)
- National recognition: Carnegie Classification of Community Engagement, Presidential Honor Roll
- Enhanced visibility in the community and positive community relations
- Increased student recruitment opportunities

## METHODS OF INTEGRATING ACADEMIC SERVICE-LEARNING INTO COURSES

- Projects may be *one-time visits* (BIOL326 Brain Awareness Fair at local middle schools), *periodic visits* (ART Ceramics project with elementary students), or *on-going visits* (SOCW310 Cougar Pals weekly visits).
- Service activity can be *direct* (MUS331 music lessons) or *indirect* (PUBR300 public relations campaign proposal to local non-profit).
- Service-learning can be done as *whole class* (HEB201 Seder event), *small groups* (CINE475 groups assigned to different community partners), or *individually* (SPAN101 dual immersion school service).
- Projects may take place *during class time* (PE452 adaptive PE lessons) or *outside class time* (COMM230 action enterprise project with a local non-profit).
- Service-learning partnerships/placements may be established by *CASL staff* (ENGL406 English lessons), *faculty or department* (UNRS312 nursing clinicals), or *individual student* (HON380 visits with an aging adult).
- Projects may be *place-based service* (GLBL355 Study Away service sites) and may include *community-based research* (GLBL350 global learning term research project for non-profit organization).
- Service may also be *academic apprenticeships* (EDLS200 Teacher Apprentice Program) *course-based internships* (MIN401 ministry internships), *clinical requirements* (UNRS404 pediatric rotation), or *fieldwork* (PYSC455 field experience).

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● advocate ● collaborate ● support ●

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