



The Career College Information Source

SPECIAL ISSUE

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CAREER COLLEGE SERVICE LEARNING

Enriching Student Learning, Engagement and Retention

Making the Case for Service Learning

Experience, Validation and Career Development

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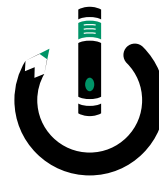
Making It From Scratch: Service Learning at The Chef's Academy

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solve & evolve

shape the next generation of career education



To celebrate the formation of the Pearson Service Learning Advisory Board, Pearson is the proud sponsor of this edition of the *Career Education Review – Career College Service Learning: Enriching Student Learning, Engagement and Retention*. Here you will find strong cases, submitted by our board members, for service learning in career education. These articles highlight the outstanding work career colleges are doing to give back to their communities and simultaneously enhance their students' learning experiences.

Service learning in career education is not a new concept by any means—private sector and career colleges have long paved the way for community enrichment through academic programs, strengthening their students' connection to their schools while providing them with real-world experience and interaction in their desired fields. Integrating service learning into career education programs is one way we can ensure that students are receiving a well-rounded education.

Students who participate in service learning initiatives gain the skills, confidence and assurance that they can perform out in their field after graduation. These are qualities that cannot be taught solely in the classroom, and we are happy to see so many institutions exploring and implementing service learning into their educational programs. Pearson supports these programs wholeheartedly and, through the vision of our Service Learning Advisory Board, is committed to providing the guidance and thought leadership for continued growth in service learning for years to come.

It's been an interesting year in career college education; yet despite the challenges we all have faced, career education has seen tremendous growth in both the quality of education and gainfully employed students they graduate. Pearson is proud to stand behind these institutions and supports their efforts in providing cost-effective, innovative solutions that will shape the next generation of career education.

To learn more about the Career Service Learning Advisory Board and for more information on Pearson Private Sector and Career Education, visit our Web site www.pearsonlearningsolutions.com/private-sector/.

Also, be sure to Like Us on Facebook at <http://on.fb.me/vDrC4S>. Here you will find information on events and news from the sector, Pearson's presence at state and national association meetings, and our popular "Solve & Evolve" webinar series.

Join Pearson as we celebrate service learning in career education with the *Career Education Review*.

John Wannemacher
Director of Marketing
Pearson Learning Solutions
john.wannemacher@pearson.com

Michael Cooney
Editor
Career Education Review
mcooney@careereducationreview.net

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Illinois Campus Compact: Providing Service Learning Resources to Help You on Your Way

with Kathy Engelken, Executive Director, Illinois | Campus Compact

So you want to develop a service learning program on your campus, but aren't sure how or where to start? The Illinois Campus Compact is one of several resources that can help.

Illinois Campus Compact, an affiliate of the national Campus Compact, is a presidents and member organization that works with colleges and universities in Illinois. Specifically, it helps campus presidents to engage their schools in service learning and civic engagement, and further serves as a resource to faculty, staff and students to help them engage with their communities. They provide a variety of resource tools to help accomplish those things.

"We have grants we give to campuses through competitive application. We offer workshops and conferences. We have 23 AmeriCorps VISTAS across the state assisting campuses to get involved in the communities near them," explained Kathy Engelken, executive director of the Illinois Campus Compact, based at DePaul University. "We also have 100 stu-

dents in the state involved in another AmeriCorps Service and Education Award program."

Reasons why a school might want to develop a service learning initiative can be as varied as the projects themselves. One reason might be that the school administration sees value in connecting

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to the community in which they are based. After all, Engelken said, students are not just part of the college; they are a part of the community in which they live and the school is a part.

"We don't want to just use the community; we want to be a part of it. So we try to give back as many ways

as we can,” she said. “But many times when I talk with presidents (of colleges and universities) they want to effectively help their students become good citizens. A lot of the time it’s part of the school’s mission statement to be an engaged campus, so another reason might be that they want to find

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ways to get their faculty involved and to get their students involved in finding ways that the institution can actually support the community in which it’s living.

Plus, service learning also helps build strong community partnerships and a lot of campuses see that as a reason.”

Before you begin to develop a service learning program it is important to understand the differences between service learning and community service—and they are different, said Engelken.

“If you’re talking about community-based learning you’re talking about learning that’s directly connected to the community in the field. So it might be internships or professional practica, like how nurses do their observations and practicum, or teachers do. Or schools send students into banks or other kinds of businesses to get hands-on experience in their field. So those kinds of things would be considered community-based or service learning,” she explained. “Community service is when schools get their students and faculty involved in volunteerism. I always think about it as more like one-time projects like doing a marathon or a food drive or clothing drive or cleaning up the park day kind of thing. Sometimes there’s outreach programs that are not connected to any courses where students or faculty just want to volunteer and that’s considered com-

munity service and outreach. But when you’re talking about service learning, you’re talking about the teaching and the learning connected, which is often called academic service learning or co-curricular service learning and service-based internships where it’s connected to an academic course. So you might have someone in a sociology class where they work with the mayor’s office to do some data gathering and to learn about what the sociology of the city might be.”

Service learning always includes some kind of community service, but it is also always connected to a course; whereas community service by itself is not necessarily connected to a course, in which case it is just community service or volunteerism.

“The simple definition of service learning is you have an academic course, a community need that connects somehow to that course, and you have a reflection piece,” said Engelken.

Once a school decides to move forward with establishing a service learning program, it should consider having a coordinator of service learning and civic engagement on their campus.

“Sometimes that’s in the student affairs area; sometimes it’s in the academic area. You also want to start talking about it on your campus and you pull together a couple of people

For More Information:



Illinois | Campus Compact

Kathy Engelken

Executive Director

E-mail: kengelke@depaul.edu

who will be like a task force to begin looking at who's already doing community service and service learning throughout the campus," she said. "A lot of times individual faculty are getting their students involved already in the community. That's one of the ways people teach. Also, a lot of times there are student organizations that are involved in the community. So you need to start surveying to see who's doing what already in the community and how they're doing it. You can do that with a committee or task force."

Once that is done, Engelken said a school might want to contact Campus Compact to see what resources they have that the school might be able to use. It's also important, at this point, that faculty members understand what service learning is and what it isn't.

"Those kinds of discussions can be had at a faculty meeting; sometimes you do it at a special professional development workshop for faculty; some campuses bring me in to specifically have this kind of conversation with faculty who want to attend and talk about it," Engelken explained. "From there we just start giving them the resources to get started."

Having buy-in at the top level is important at the outset of any service learning program and Illinois Campus Compact doesn't even work with campuses that don't have the necessary support.

"Our organization is a presidents' organization, so we do not take member campuses on unless they have buy-in from their president. Once they say they support civic engagement and service learning and that they want the campus to work toward doing that, we talk with the provost or vice-president of academic affairs to determine which disciplines

are already doing service learning, which they'd like to have do it, etc.," she said. "And I really think you have to have student affairs as well as academic affairs involved in order to make it a strong case because student affairs can oftentimes be very supportive of the students—getting them to their sites, helping with reflection, helping organize with community partners, things like that."

Engelken noted that a service learning program can still be successful, even if it doesn't have buy-in from every person or every entity within a campus.

"I have some campuses that don't have total buy-in. They have some faculty who are strong supporters and have been doing service learning for a long time, but it never moves out of their particular discipline or their specific classroom, no matter how

hard they try to get it to move," said Engelken. "Any individual faculty member doing it with their students can be successful. And the cool thing is once students

start doing it, they start saying to their faculty members 'Are we going to do service learning? I came to this class hoping that we would or expecting that we would.' Students can sometimes do more of a push than anyone else can to get some things rolling."

In addition, Engelken said it is important to remember that you're never going to have every faculty member from every single department campus-wide doing some kind of service learning.

"I think any discipline can do service learning, but not necessarily every faculty member is able to pull it off. I don't know why that is except

It is important to remember that you're never going to have every faculty member from every single department campus-wide doing some kind of service learning.

sometimes people just don't coordinate very well, or they don't want to deal with people outside of their classrooms, or whatever," she said. "I think with the younger faculty it's a lot different. They're already coming in having had service learning experience in college, so they're ready to come in and start doing it on a campus they're teaching on."

Though the results of service learning are not always immediately recognized, especially if they're long-

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term results, a school can expect some immediate results. According to Engelken, they can expect positive feedback from their students and the community partners they're developing; and hopefully some kudos, as well,

from campus administrators.

But whether the results are immediate, short- or long-term, success of a service learning project depends on how it is implemented.

"One of the things I think really helps a campus to get going is for them to apply for funding from us. We have State Farm faculty fellows and teacher fellows. We've had that grant program running for 10 years and it's always a positive for a campus," said Engelken, adding that it helps a campus build credibility if they've applied for grant money. "That also usually gets the attention of the administrators if they haven't been paying a whole lot of attention before."

Getting PR for a project can help not only with its own success, but the success of future projects.

"Putting together photos and videos of the work your students are doing and bringing it back to the campus so that it gets in newsletters and newspapers, as well as on the Web is important," she said. "And the school's marketing offices can use it as a way to draw students in. These are things that are constantly ongoing."

"Success grows with each positive partner that you have, and with the enthusiasm of the students for the longevity of the faculty member doing it in their classes. Sometimes it takes

Best Practices for Schools Looking to Set Up a Service Learning Program or Initiative

- Get several people to start the task force or task committee to begin looking at what you want to do;
- Get buy-in from the campus president; then seek it from those below him or her;
- Make sure the definitions are clear between community service and service learning;
- Look at your curriculum to see which courses would best support service learning;
- Develop community partnerships;
- Involve the students in some of the planning;
- Know where your resources are. There are so many web resources and all people need to do is Google 'service learning' and they will find them. There are a lot of different resources out there where people can start getting books and ideas from; and
- Join Campus Compact. Visit www.illinoiscompact.org in Illinois or the national Campus Compact at www.compact.org.

a campus 10 years to be fully engaged (in a service learning initiative). I think it's really important for the faculty member to sit down with the community partner or partners they're working with to say, "These are the objectives of my course. This is the goal that I have for my students in the community project. What are your needs and your objectives," said Engelken, who continued by saying that in the end you can evaluate whether the objectives were met or not. "You have to have that kind of relationship with your community partners. Just sending students out into the community is asking for disaster. You have to know what you're doing. If you sit down with your community partners and decide how you want things to work, they will be successful. And if things aren't working you talk to each other about what's not working and find a way to make it work."

If a particular project hasn't been successful the first time it was tried, or something was done that had been successful and for some reason wasn't this time around, a school, classroom or group shouldn't just give up and abandon the idea altogether. The failure could have been the result of poor execution; the timing of the project; societal changes that may require it be tweaked; etc., But it's important to examine what happened and how it can be fixed in the future. That way, Engelken said, it will strengthen what the school is doing as a whole.

And always remember that success or failure, service learning produces important learning outcomes for the students involved, and that can never be a failure.

"One of the key learning outcomes is that students see a connection between the service that they're doing and the academic courses that they're taking. Another would be their increased responsibility as citizens in their community and our democracy. We really try to promote good citizenship and I think the way you do that is by getting involved in the community. I think students also learn how to work with a variety of people, which is always a good thing," said Engelken. "These things all help with increased retention. If they have a good experience, they're going to stay in or come back to college. It teaches them civic responsibility and that what they're doing helps build stronger communities. I want them to leave college and go into the community and be active on the boards of community organizations; I want them to be involved in United Way work; I want them to reach out to the poor and the needy and to help look at how community problems can be solved and how we can live in a stronger democracy. We need to teach them not to just put band-aids on things, but instead to learn how to fix them. Service learning can do that."